

Steering Committee Meeting #2



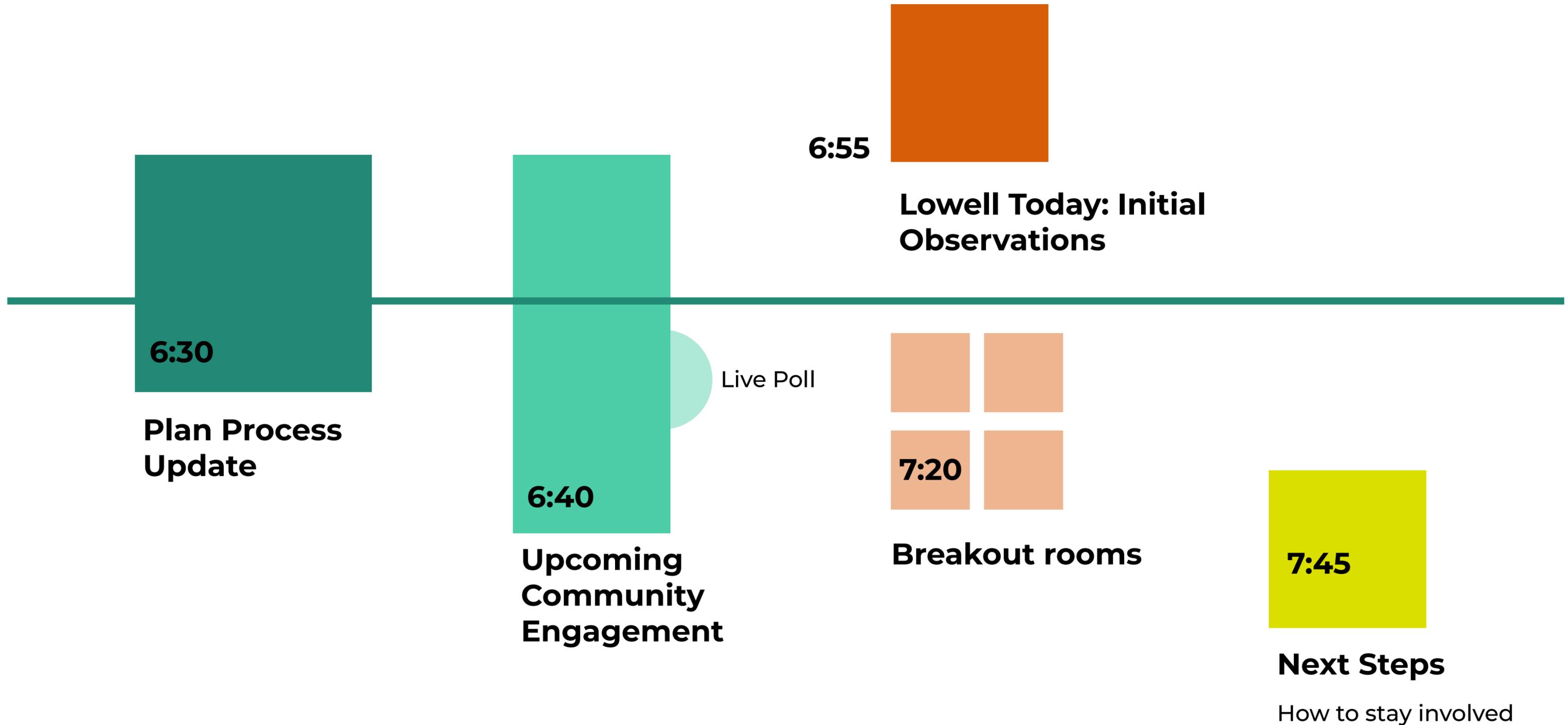
FORWARD

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AVANZA

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Agenda

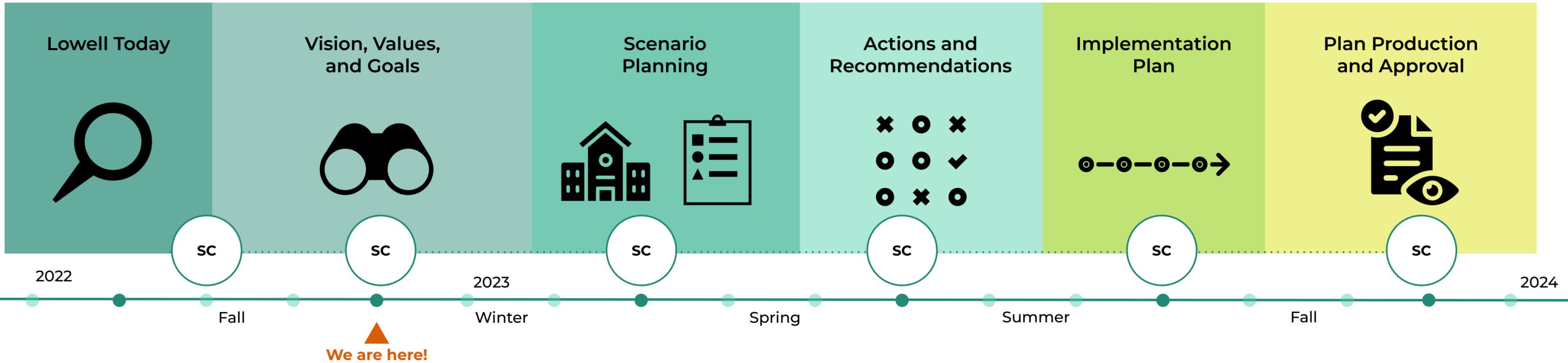


Process Update



Plan Steps/Phases

Learning and visioning → Testing future visions → Developing the plan →



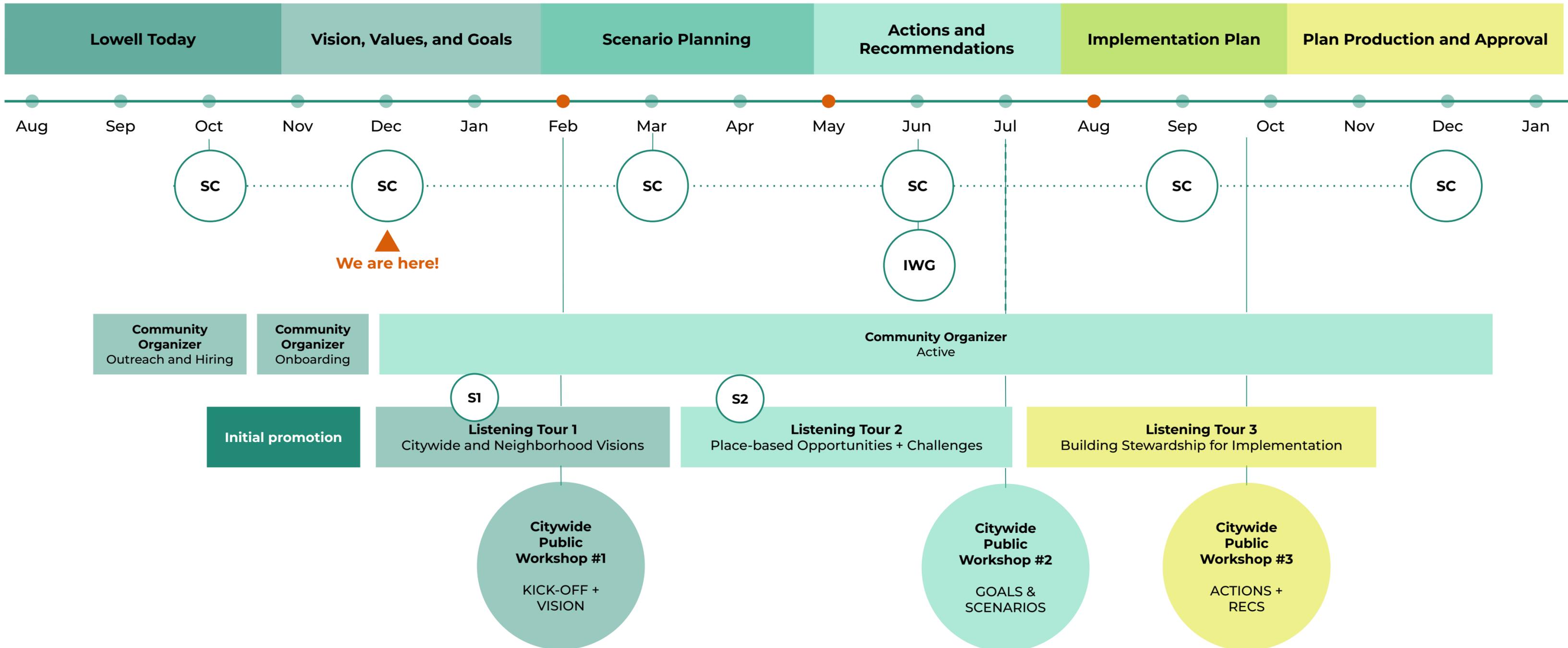
Where are we today?

Where do we want to go?

How do we get there?

Timeline (updated)

Learning and Visioning → Testing Future Visions → Developing a plan →



SC = Steering Committee, IWG = Interdepartmental Working Groups, S = Survey Launch

What does a Comprehensive Plan include?

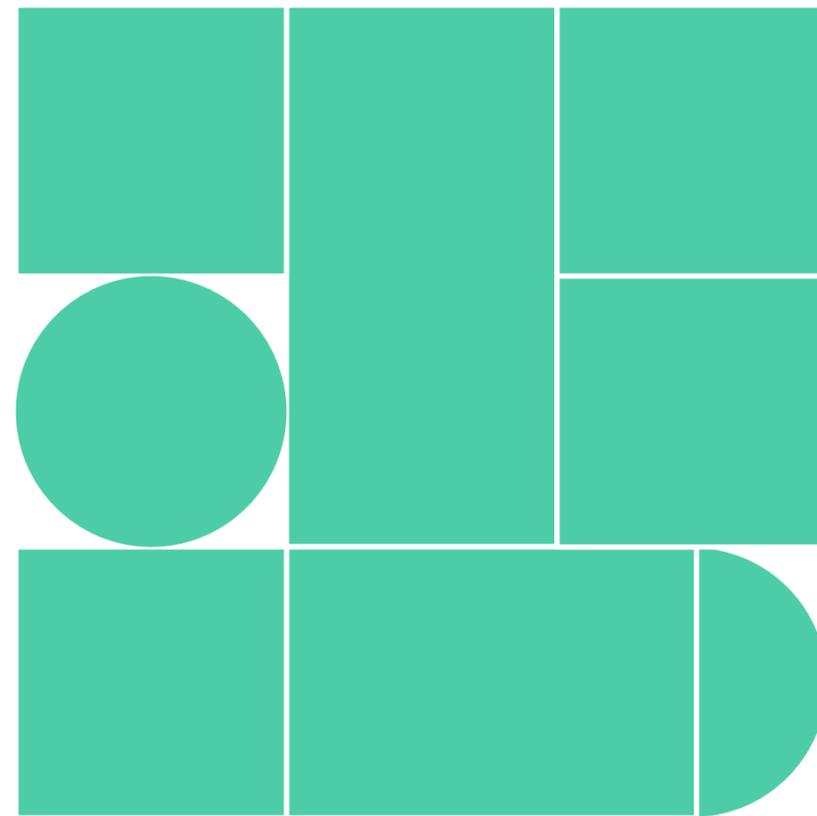
Vision and Values



A shared vision for the city and its neighborhoods

- Past and ongoing planning efforts

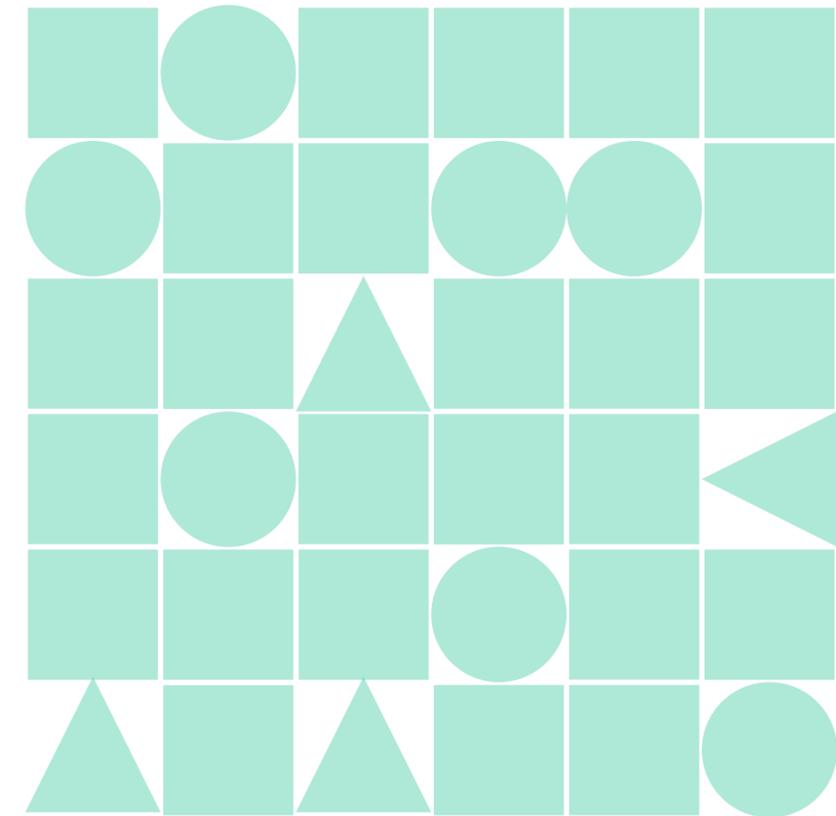
Goals and Objectives



Coordinated goals that support the vision

- City Departments

Actions and Strategies



A guide for policymaking and investments in the near future

- Grants and Funds
- Stakeholders
- Existing initiatives

Community Engagement

Lowell Forward - approach

Toward more dynamic ambitions of resiliency (the ability to survive, adapt, and grow in the face of change).

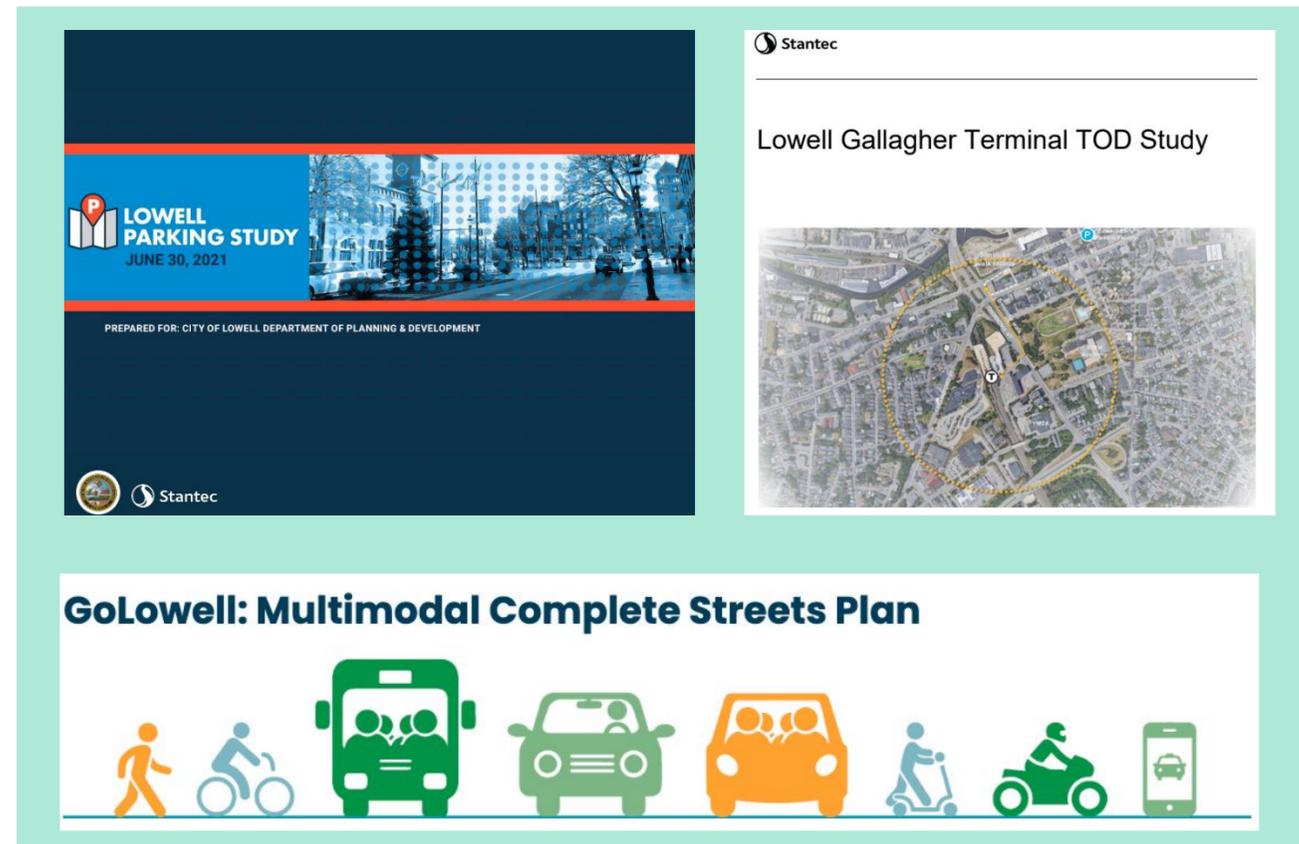
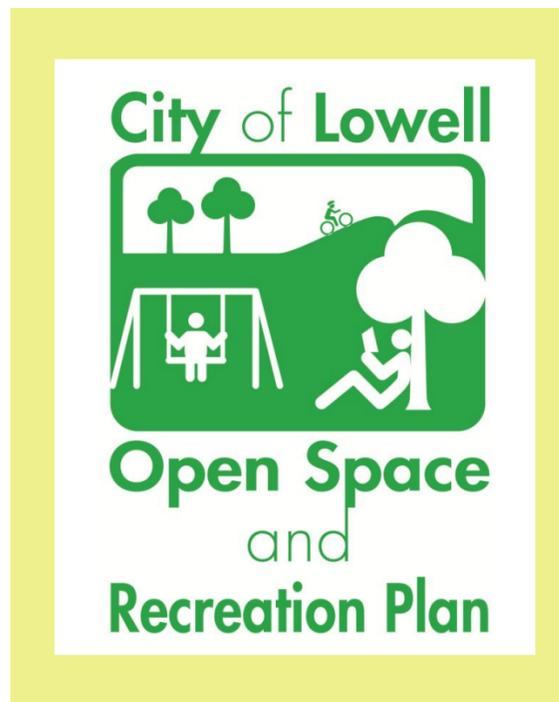
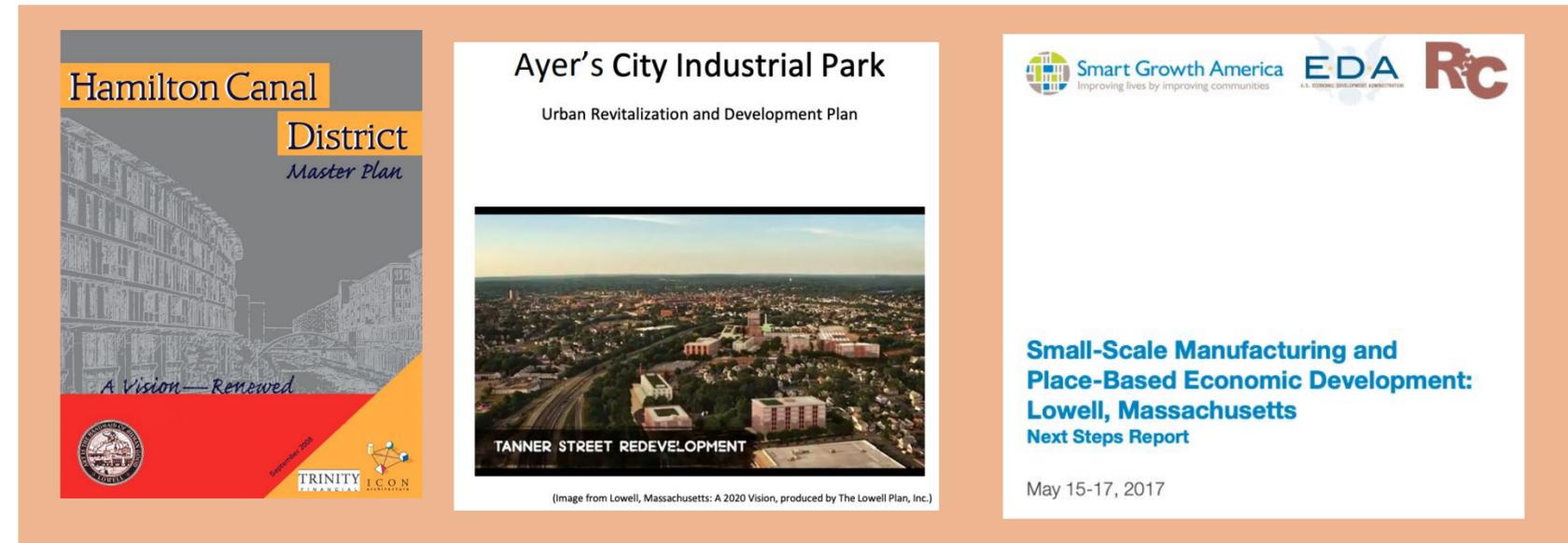
Enhance Resiliency

Acknowledges the complex interrelationships of these topics, highlights locally relevant key themes, and weaves the concept of resiliency throughout:

- Goals
- Land Use
- Housing
- Economic Development
- Natural and Cultural Resources
- Open Space and Recreation
- Services and Facilities
- Circulation
- Implementation

Integrate topic areas

Building upon and stitching together planning efforts



- Other initiatives:**
- TDI Fellow for Lowell's Upper Merrimack Street
 - Revitalizing Lower Lock
 - Lord Overpass Redesign - Stage 4
 - 1999 Acre Plan Boundary
 - Concord River Greenway
 - South Common Master Plan - Phase II
 - 2001 JAM Area Boundary

Sustainable Lowell 2025

Lowell's previous Comprehensive Plan



Goals and Action Areas

- Sustainable neighborhoods
- Housing choice
- Mobility and access
- Vibrant and unique urban hub
- Healthy and sustainable local economy
- Environmental resilience
- Effective operations, infrastructure and tech
- Sustained public engagement

Vision/Themes

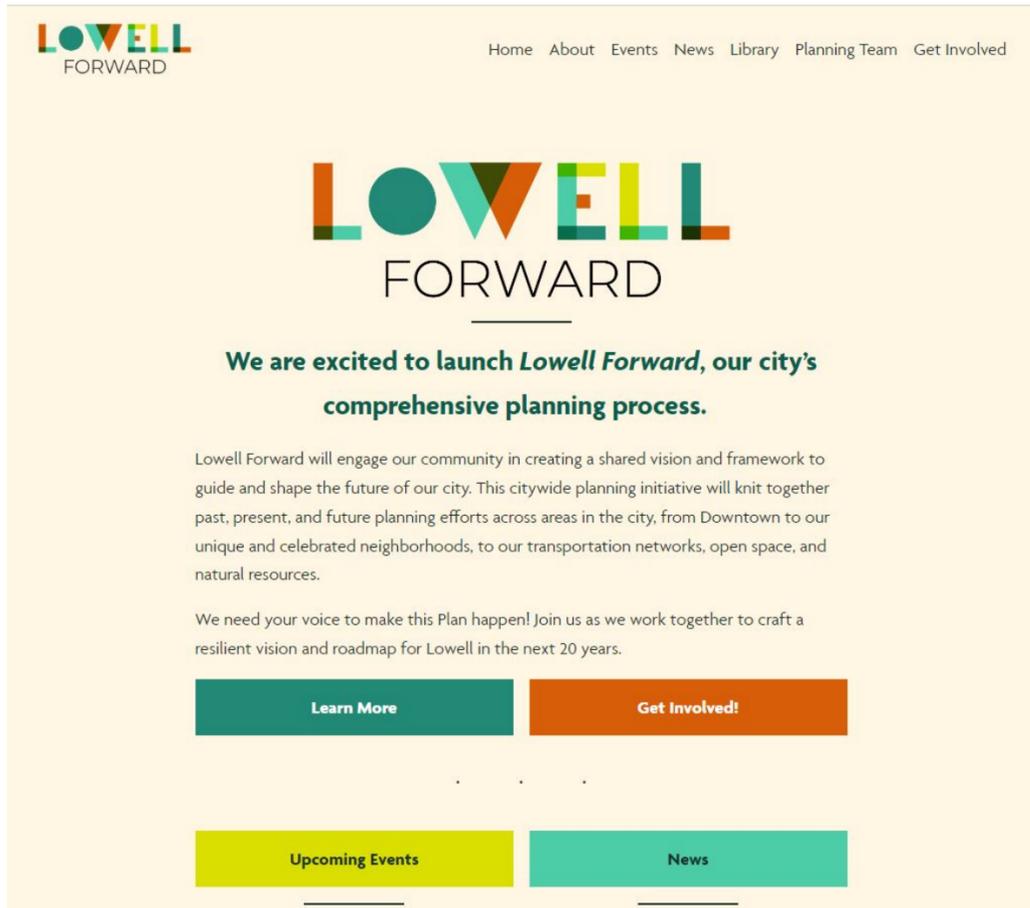
- **Livability:** offer a high quality of life for residents of all backgrounds and stages in life.
- **Place-making:** an attractive and interesting place, a hub for innovation and sustainable economic development
- **Longevity:** proactively prepare for social, economic and environmental trends, and put policies in place that will endure beyond any given set of leaders
- **Responsibility:** Cultivate a community-wide, shared ethic of sustainability for both the present and future

Upcoming Community Engagement

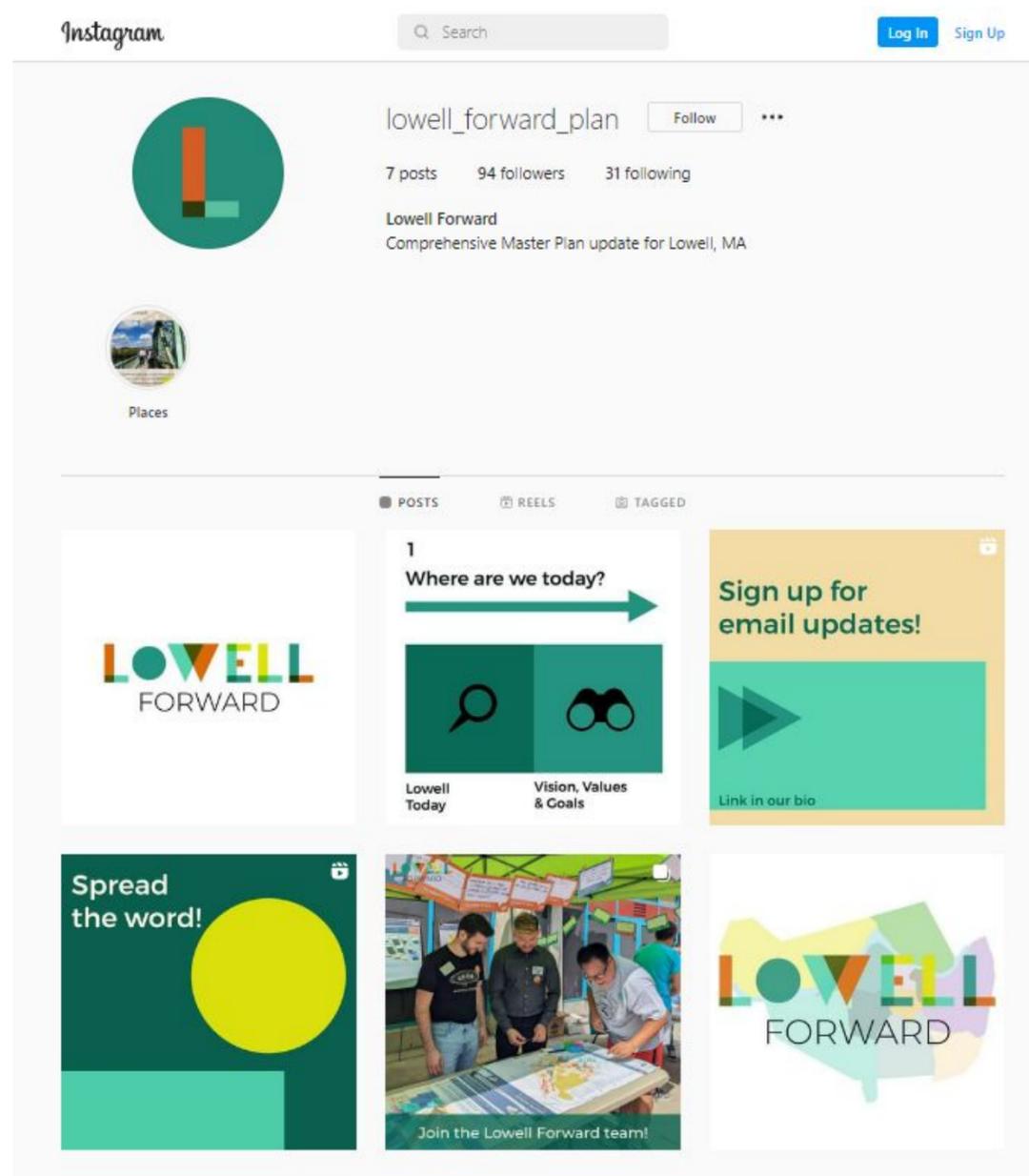


Website Launch and Social Media Outreach

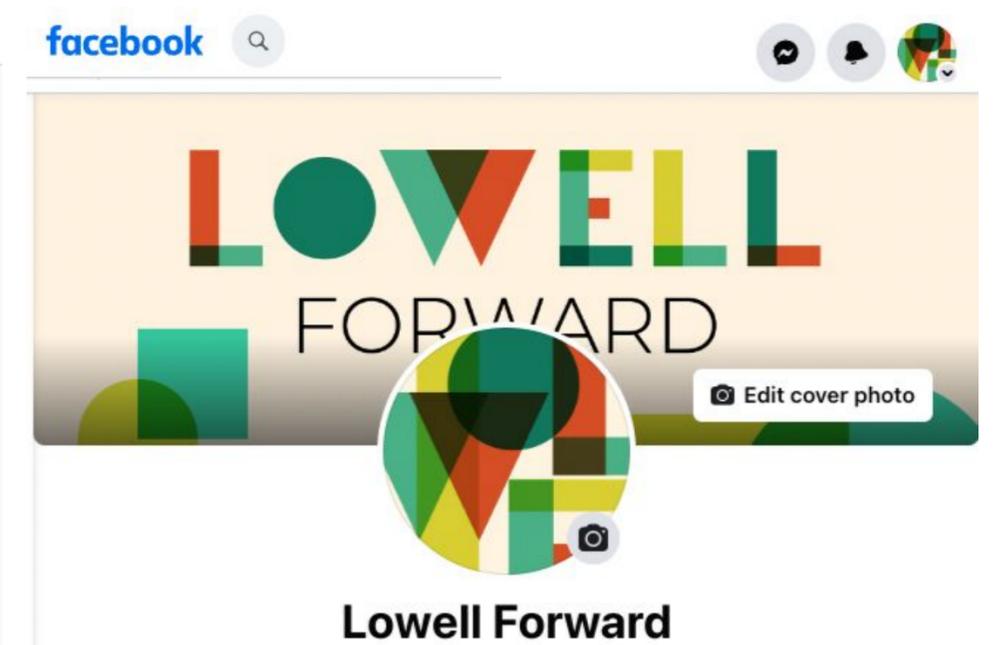
forward.lowellma.gov



@lowell_forward_plan



Lowell Forward



Follow us for updates, actively participate on comment sections, and help us spread the word!

Meet our Community Organizer!

- Engage, listen to, and build trust with historically underrepresented populations in Lowell.
- Open doors to continued civic engagement through clear and open communications, inspiring grassroots/citizen agency.

Traditional Methods

- Recruit participation for public events
- Communications and event support

New Methods

- Build strategic networks, teams
- Collect, report, and analyze data

Contact Mercy at:

lowellforward@utiledesign.com

Meet our new...



Community Organizer

Mercy Anampiu brings decades of experience within the Lowell community engaging with Lowell residents around issues of public health and equitable outcomes.



Survey 1: Vision and Values

Access the survey at:

<https://forms.gle/AdjCzebVa9piq9V49>

- 1. In our 2013 Comprehensive Plan we identified these 4 vision points with the community. We'd like to know if you think these themes are still important.**
 - a. Livability
 - b. Place-making
 - c. Longevity
 - d. Responsibility
- 2. What other themes should we consider in Lowell Forward, our updated Comprehensive Plan?**
- 3. What are some things you love about Lowell as a city? About your neighborhood?**
- 4. What do you want to see improve or change in Lowell? In your neighborhood?**

Take our visioning survey

What do you want for the Lowell of the future? Tell us what you like about the city and what could improve

Access the survey (link in bio):
<https://forms.gle/AdjCzebVa9piq9V49>

LOVELL
FORWARD

Citywide Workshop 1:

Agenda:

1. Lowell Forward ***Kick-off presentation***
2. ***Interactive boards*** with an overview of Lowell Today
3. ***Topic area stations with activity*** around establishing Core Values and a Shared Vision for Lowell

****This will be an in-person event****

A promotional graphic for the Citywide Workshop 1. It features a large, stylized tree shape composed of overlapping circles and rectangles in shades of yellow, orange, and brown. The text is overlaid on this graphic. At the top right, there is a vertical bar with three colored segments: yellow, orange, and brown. In the bottom right corner, the 'LOVELL FORWARD' logo is displayed, with 'LOVELL' in a colorful, blocky font and 'FORWARD' in a simple, black, sans-serif font below it.

Join the Citywide Workshop 1

Wednesday February 1
6:30pm - 8:00pm
Lowell Senior Center

LOVELL
FORWARD

Citywide Workshop 1:

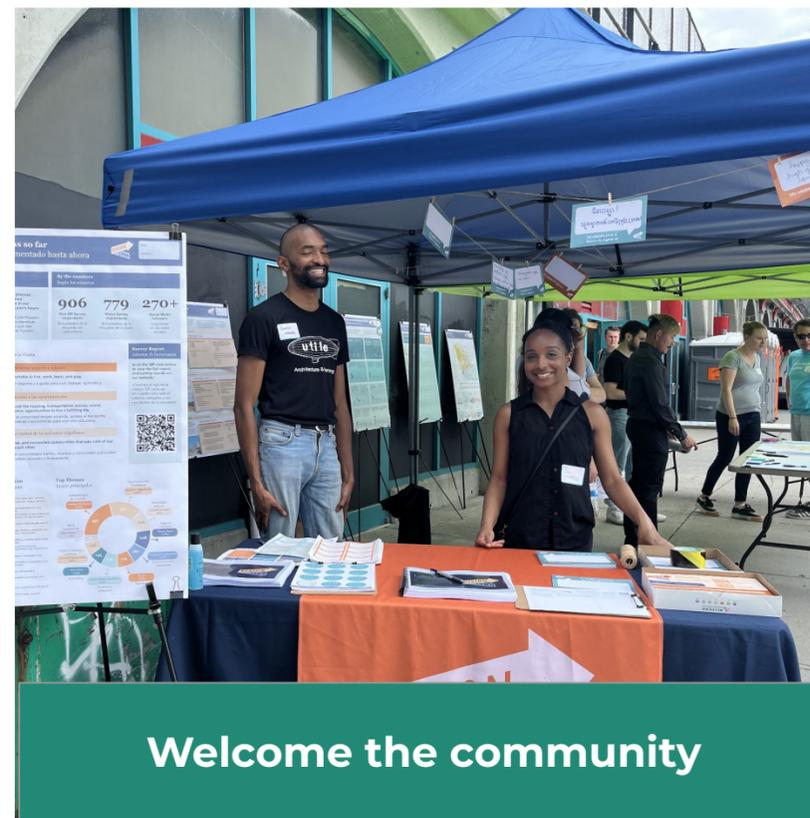
Please fill out this quick survey, there are 3 ways you can help:

<https://forms.gle/GM4GwkdhraB4wAxT8>

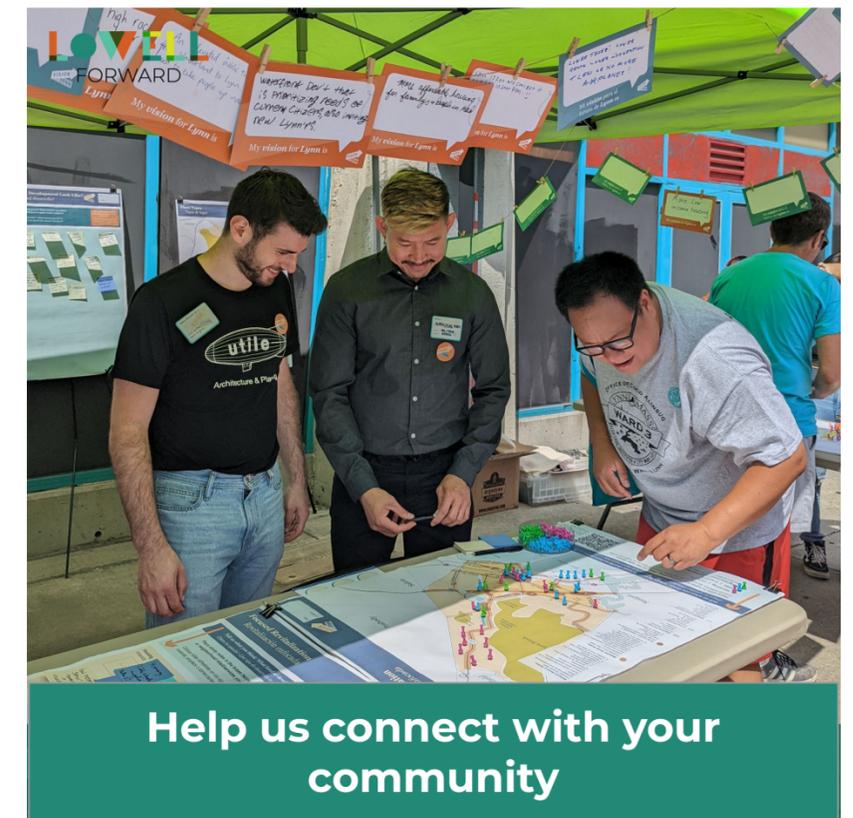
Outreach. Bring 5 people to the event!



Welcome table. Welcome folks, sign up and nametags



Interpretation. Khmer, Spanish, or Portuguese.



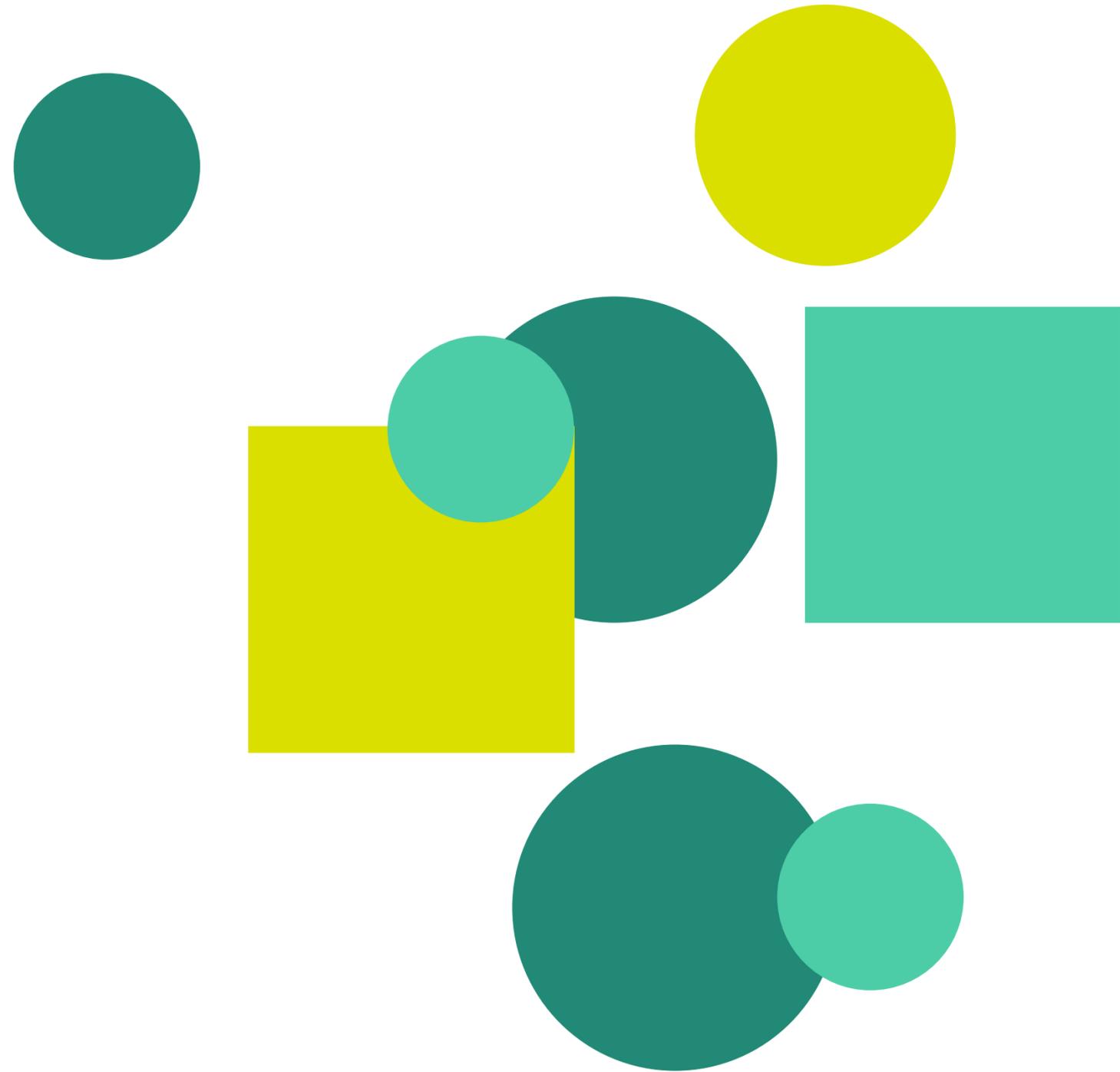
Network Building

Help us make sure that we're engaging, listening to, and building trust with historically underrepresented populations in Lowell.

Please fill out this quick survey

<https://forms.gle/oubeqUcRAkwQgmz26>

Who should we prioritize for Neighborhood Meetings and Focus Groups?



Lowell Today: Initial Observations



Lowell Today: Existing Conditions Framework

Base Conditions

Urban Form	Demographics	Housing	Economic Development	Mobility	Environment and Open Space
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Land Use ● Zoning ● Ongoing and planned initiatives ● Place types 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Population change ● Racial distribution ● Income distribution ● Educational attainment ● Employment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Housing types & household composition ● Housing density ● Housing age & vacancy ● Housing tenure 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Employment analysis ● Growth sectors ● Business health ● Commuting patterns ● Role of anchor institutions ● Commercial real estate analysis ● Fiscal sustainability 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Existing transportation network ● Existing initiatives ● New complete streets priority plan will roll out next year ● Safety & other mobility considerations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Open Space and Recreation network ● OSRP goals status ● Environment and Climate Flood Risk ● Heat island & tree coverage



Existing initiatives

- Sustainable Lowell 2013 status - plans, programs and actions status check
- Past/ongoing plans status check

Map layering: who's benefiting so far? Where are the gaps? Areas of opportunity? That can help us create a more cohesive vision for Lowell

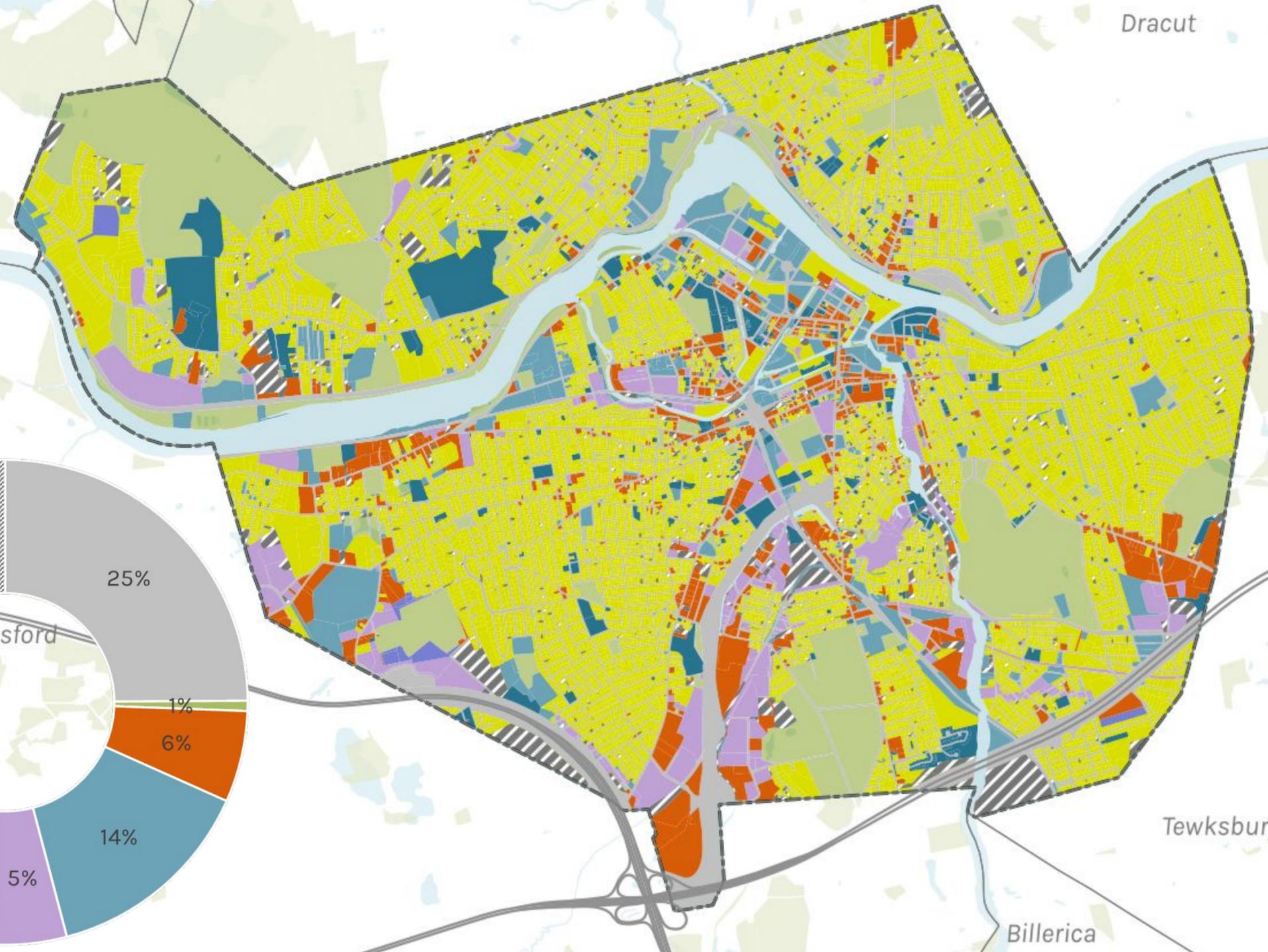
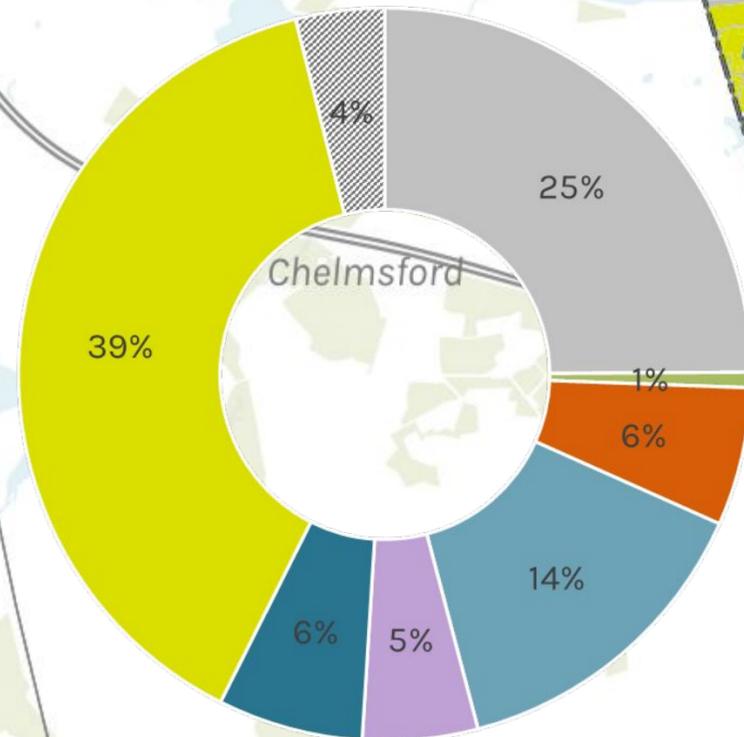
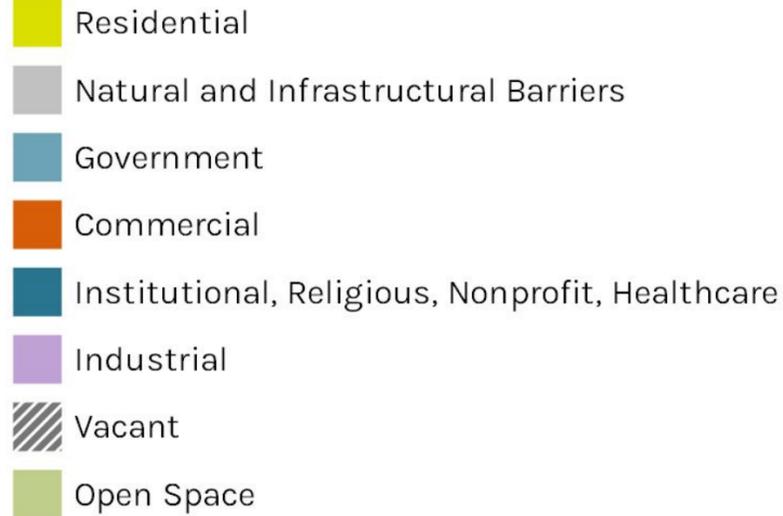
Urban Form

Comprehensive plans essentially help us to plan for and shape future physical development in the city. Establishing a **shared understanding of spatial and physical form patterns** in the city will be a central focus of the Lowell Forward process as we work together to craft a roadmap for how we want to grow and invest in our community over the next 15 to 20 years.

Land use distribution in Lowell is reflective of typical New England city patterns.

- Lowell's fabric is predominantly residential 39%
- Commercial uses ranging from small neighborhood commercial clusters to big box shopping malls at the city edges.
- The urban core along the river and T station contain a mix of uses including dense residential, commercial, small industrial and institutional.
- Larger industrial land, and transportation infrastructure create barriers and breaks in the urban fabric.

Land Use



Source: Metropolitan Area Planning Council (MAPC), 2020

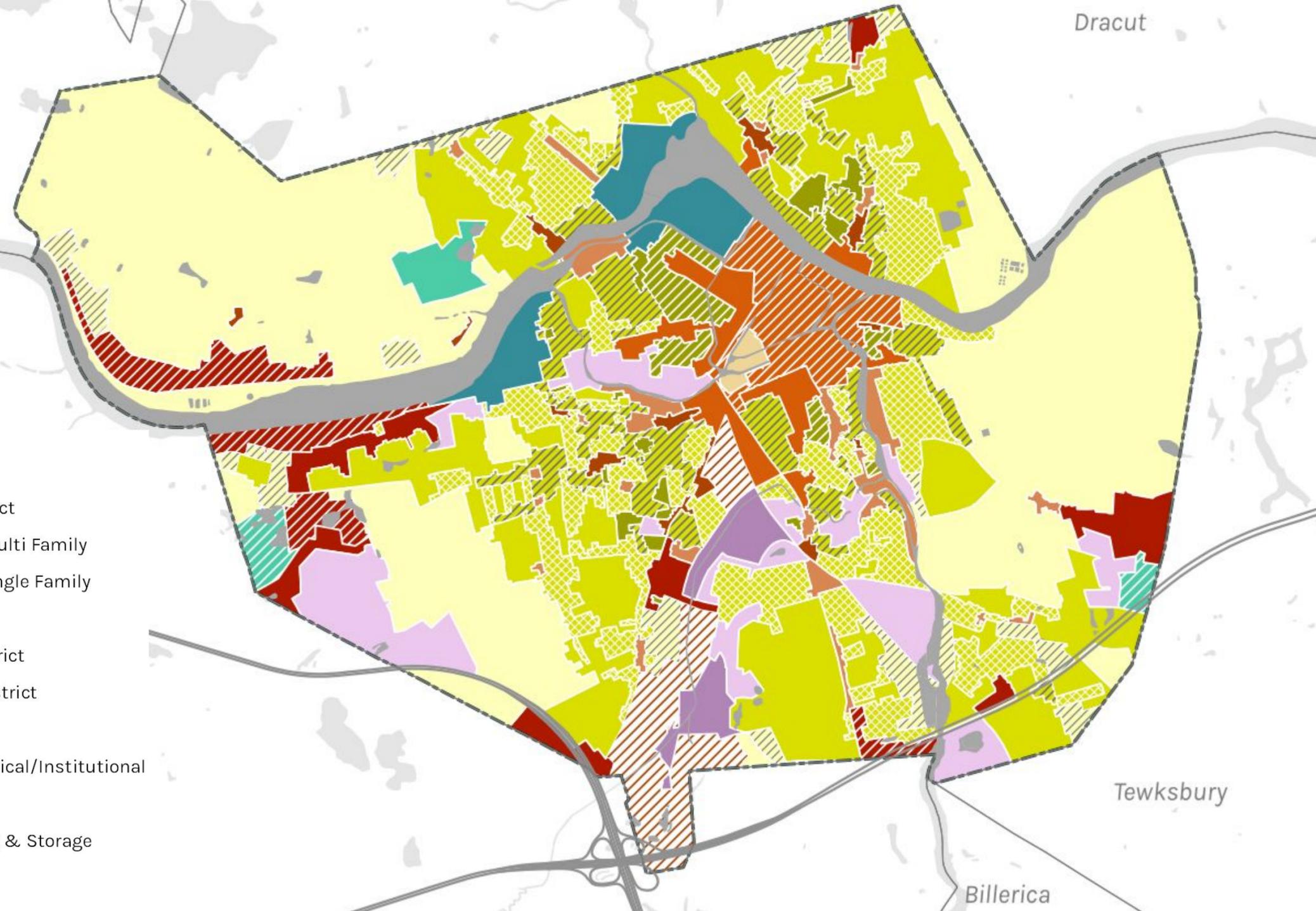
Lowell's zoning follows built form, though not precisely.

- Lowell is mostly zoned as residential, predominantly suburban and traditional neighborhoods, which are designed to preserve and enhance the character of newer areas and historic areas respectively.
- Many of the older buildings were constructed before zoning was enacted, and exist as non-conformities. The challenge is how to align this with eventual goals in the plan.

Existing Base Zoning Districts

	DMU -Downtown Mixed-Use District		SMU -Suburban Mixed-Use District
	HRC -High-Rise Commercial District		SMF -Suburban Neighborhood Multi Family
	HCD -Hamilton Canal District		SSF -Suburban Neighborhood Single Family
	UMU -Urban Mixed-Use District		RR -Regional Retail District
	UMF -Urban Neighborhood Multi Family		NB -Neighborhood Business District
	USF -Urban Neighborhood Single Family		INST -Institutional Mixed-Use District
	TMU -Traditional Mixed-Use District		OP -Office/Research Park
	TMF -Traditional Neighborhood Multi Family		PDMI -Planned Development Medical/Institutional
	TTF -Traditional Neighborhood Two Family		GI -General Industry
	TSF -Traditional Neighborhood Single Family		LI -Light Industry, Manufacturing & Storage

Source: City of Lowell Department of Management Information Systems



Recent & ongoing planning efforts mostly in central areas.

- Planning initiatives are mostly concentrated in the central neighborhoods. A lot of planning efforts are underway, but not all of them have been coordinated.
- Lowell Forward will stitch together past planning efforts, integrate with existing projects and coordinate a framework to move forward.

2018 - 2022

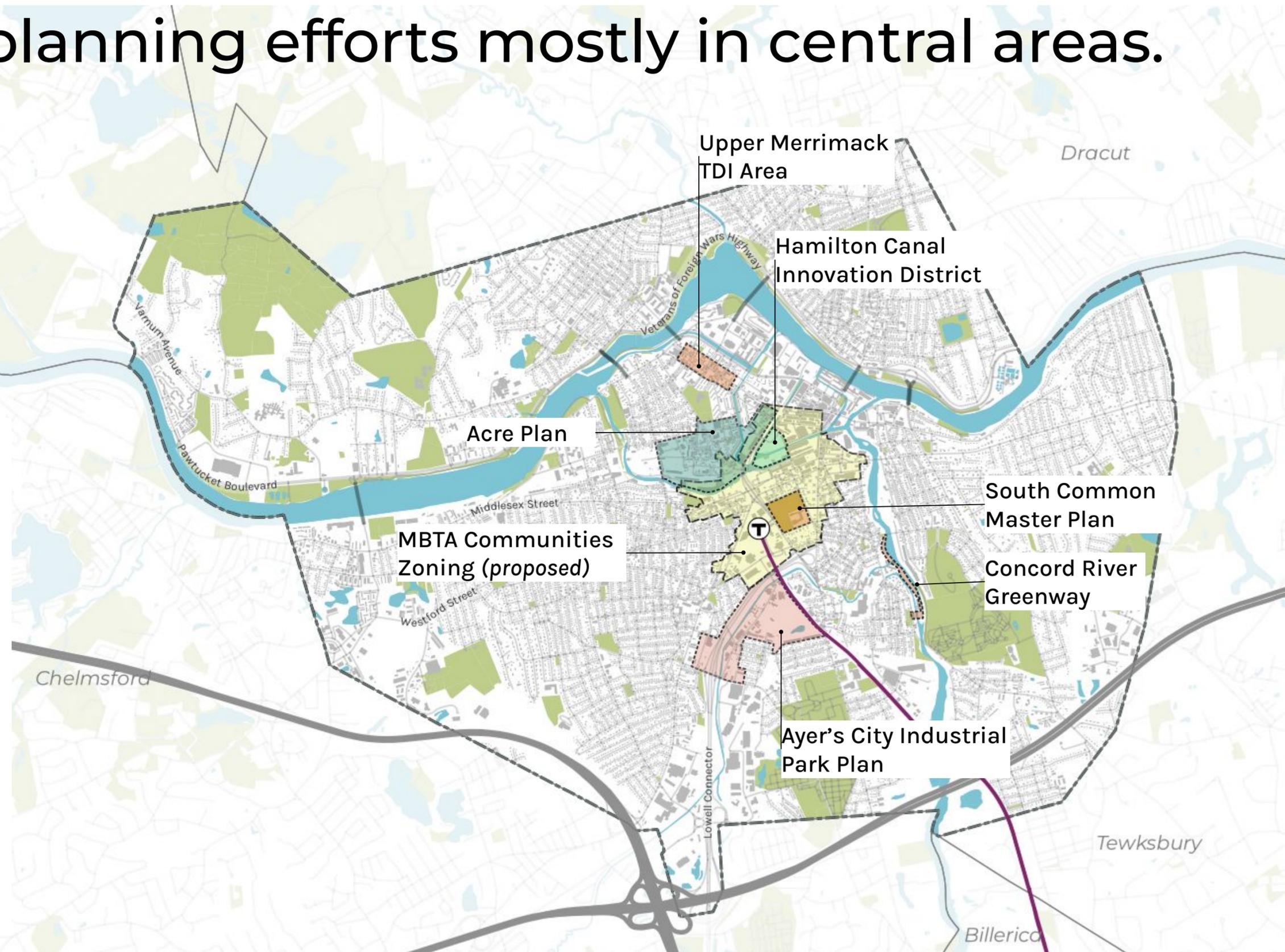
- Upper Merrimack TDI Area
- MBTA Communities Zoning (*proposed*)
- Lowell Parking Study
- LRTA Transit Plan Update
- Gallagher Terminal TOD Study
- Open Space & Recreation Plan
- Acre Plan

2010 - 2017

- Hamilton Canal Innovation District
- Sustainable Lowell 2025
- Ayer's City Industrial Park Plan

2000 - 2009

- South Common Master Plan
- Jackson-Appleton-Middlesex Plan
- Concord River Greenway



Lowell has several nodes which radiate out of downtown.

The city is composed of different types of places, each playing a different role in the daily lives of Lowell residents, workers, and visitors. Together, these places define the physical and social infrastructure of the city. Throughout this process we will work with you and the community to create a shared mental map of Lowell.

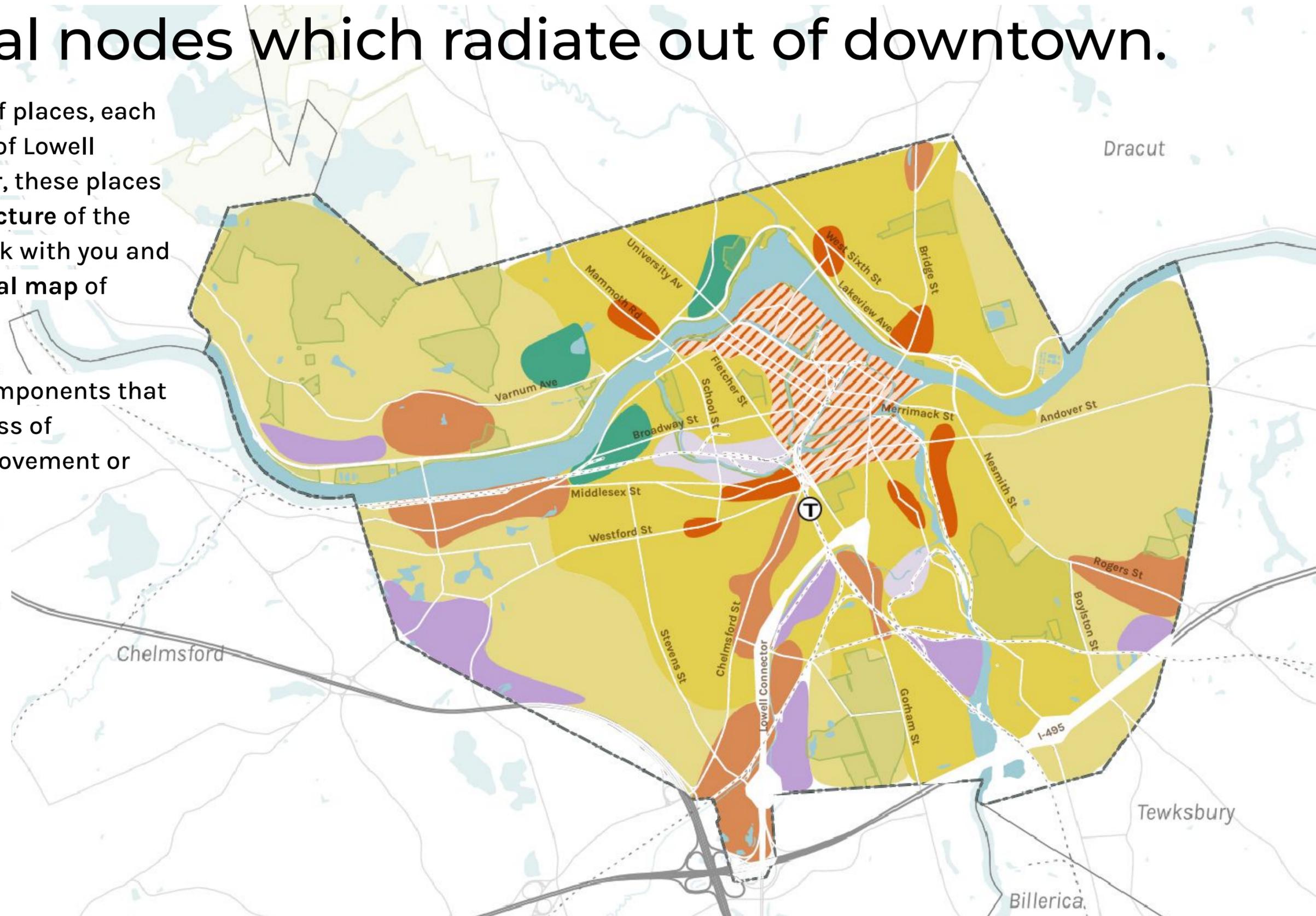
Identifying the various types of place components that make Lowell will help us begin the process of prioritizing where and what kind of improvement or change we want to see in these places.

Place Types

-  Urban Core
-  Neighborhood Node
-  Suburban Corridor
-  High Density Residential
-  Low Density Residential
-  Heavy Industrial
-  Light Industrial
-  Meds & Eds

Barriers

-  Railroad Tracks
-  Major Streets



There is a wide variety of place types in Lowell.

Nodes



Downtown



Neighborhood node - Cambodia Town



Neighborhood node - Centralville



Neighborhood node - Back Central

Neighborhoods



High density residential - Appleton Mills



Medium to High density residential - Back Central



Medium density residential - Pawtucketville



Low density residential - Belvidere

Source: top row: City of Lowell and Utile / bottom row: Utile, realtor.com, apartments.com and trulia.com

There is a wide variety of place types in Lowell.

Corridors & Streets



Merrimack St (walkable corridor)



Middlesex St (neighborhood corridor)



West 6th St (neighborhood corridor)



Chelmsford St (suburban corridor)

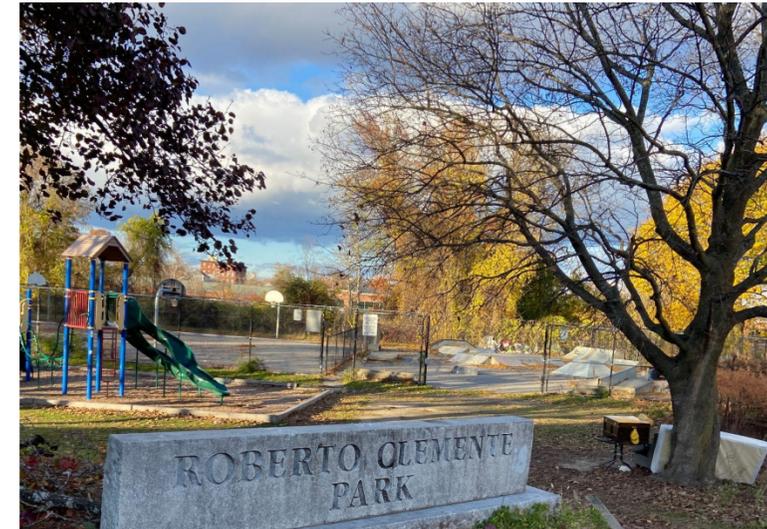
Open Space & Natural Resources



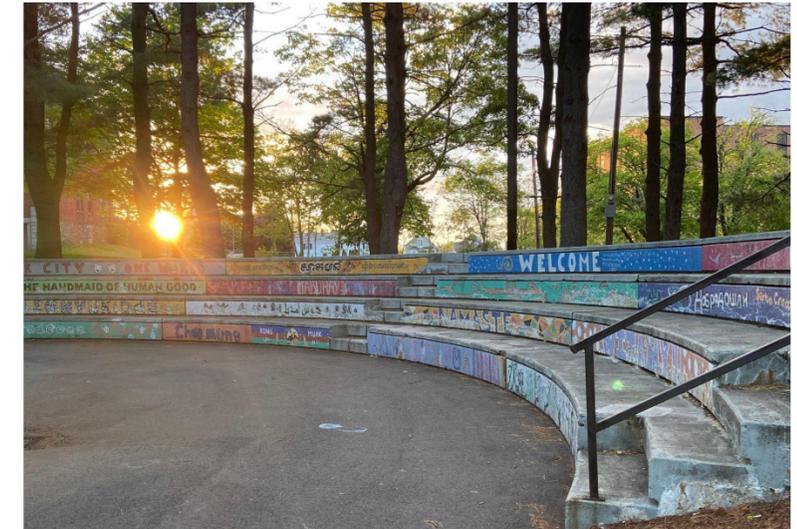
South Common (Back Central)



Merrimack River walk (Downtown)



Roberto Clemente Park (Lower Highlands/Cambodia Town)



North Common (Acre)

Source: top row: Google Street view / bottom row: City of Lowell

Land Use and Urban Form Considerations

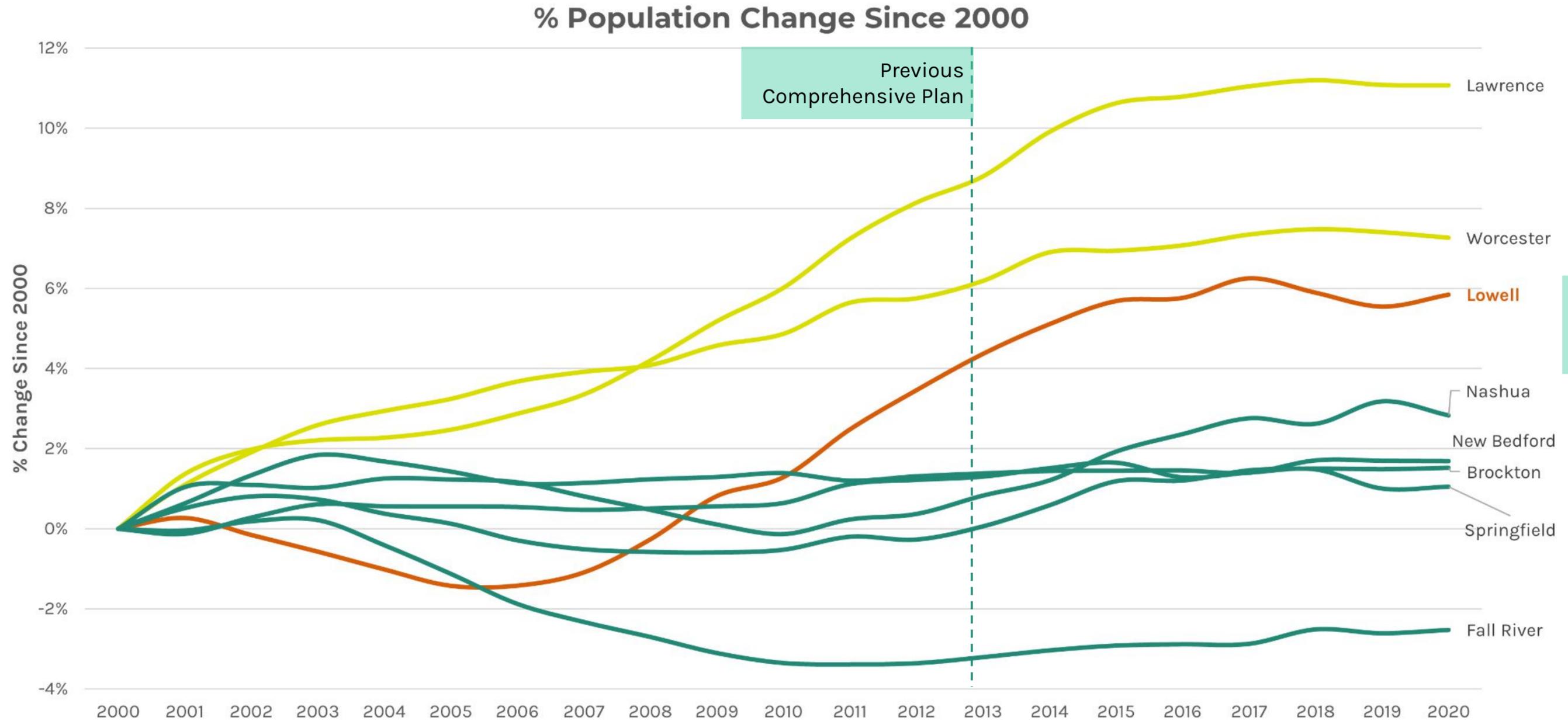
Our preliminary mental map of Lowell suggests a strong need to consider the relationship between Lowell's unique neighborhoods to downtown, the river and each other.

- What role does downtown play for neighborhoods today? How can we diversify the ways people access downtown and central neighborhoods physically?
- How can we better connect communities with economic opportunities?
- As a result of historic development patterns and new infrastructure development, there are many physical and spatial gaps (like vacant lots, industrial areas, non-walkable areas, highways, canals, and other infrastructure) present in Lowell's fabric today that heighten disparities and connections between areas in Lowell.
 - Is this a lived reality? Is this a meaningful path to pursue?
- Are there other opportunity areas in the city that we haven't mentioned here?
 - For example, there are many underutilized areas along the river, which could help highlight this natural asset beyond what is downtown.

Demographics

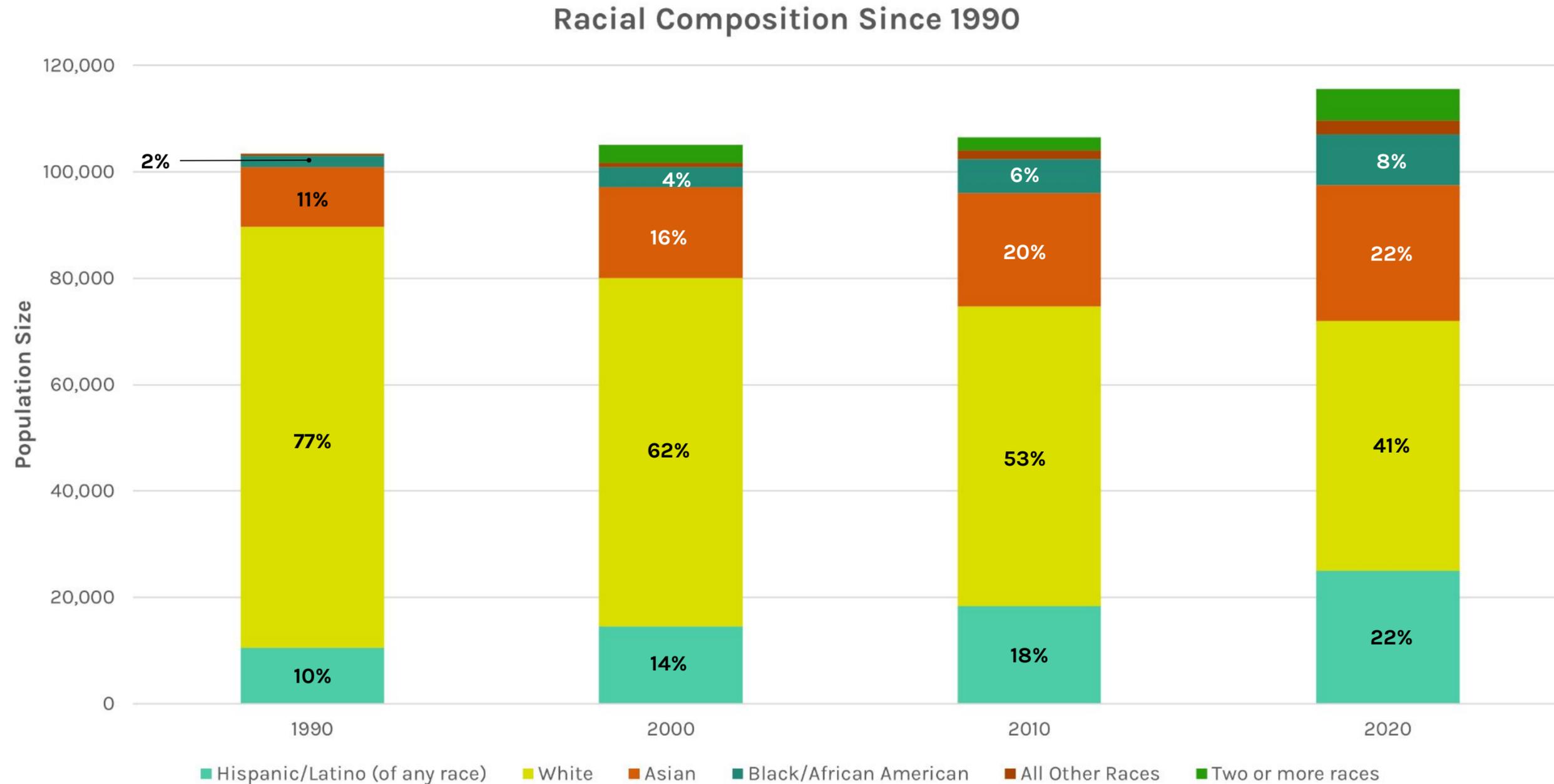
- How has Lowell's demographic composition changed and how do these patterns compare to other gateway cities?
- Are there spatial aspects connected to different communities' quality of life and economic well being?
- What trends seem likely to continue?
- How do current patterns relate to what the city wants to see in the future?

Population growth is outpacing many gateway cities.



Sources: 1990 - 2020 Decennial Censuses; Decennial Censuses and Population Estimates Program

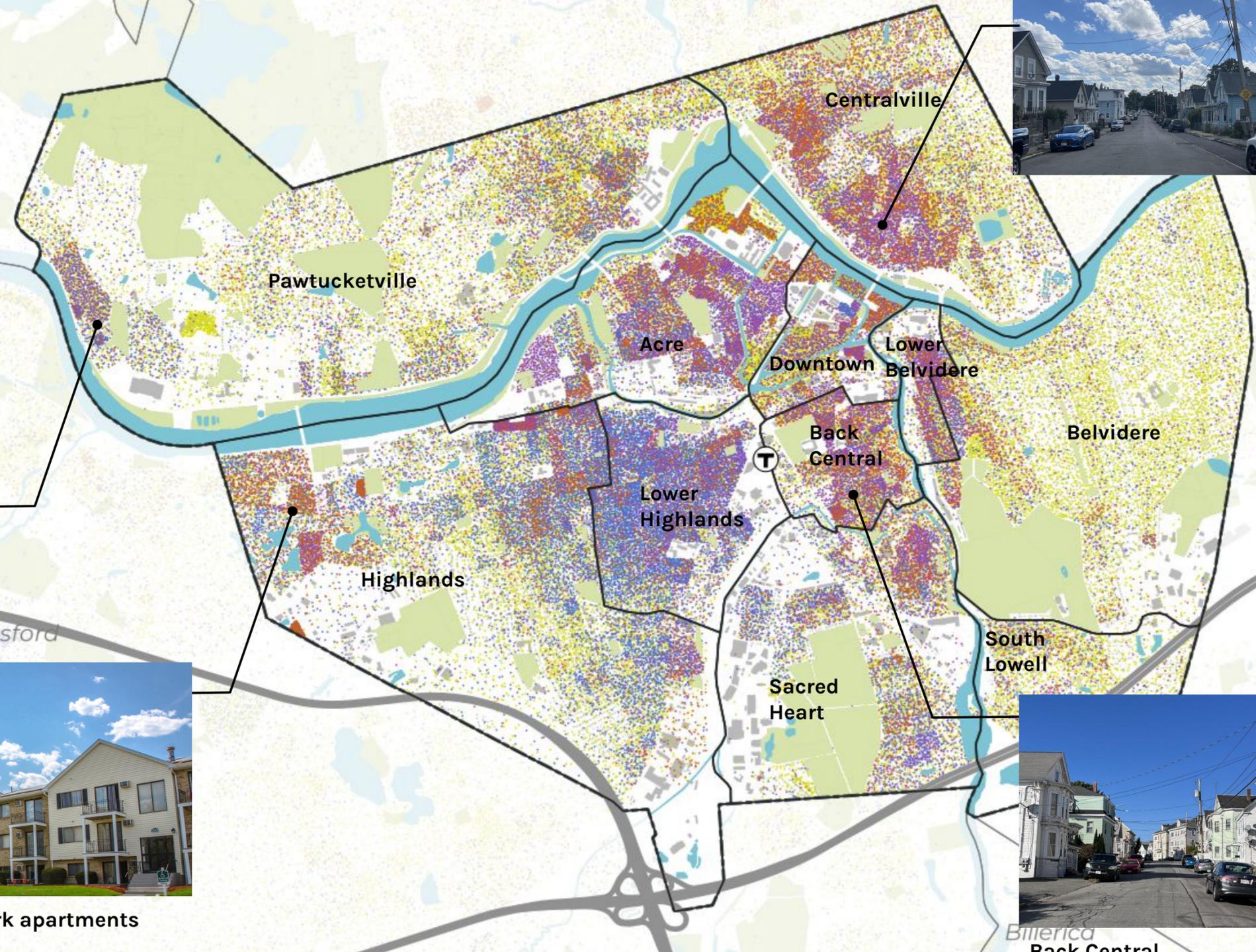
Lowell's population is also becoming more racially diverse.



Sources: 1990 - 2020 Decennial Censuses; Note: Percentages may not sum to 100% due to rounding

Lowell boasts strong diversity in the Commonwealth.

- However, while diversity has increased overall in the city, not all areas in Lowell are equally diverse. Communities of color tend to concentrate mostly in central neighborhoods, and smaller pockets at the city's edge.
- Are there spatial aspects connected to different communities' quality of life and economic well being?



Westminster Village



Princeton Park apartments



Back Central

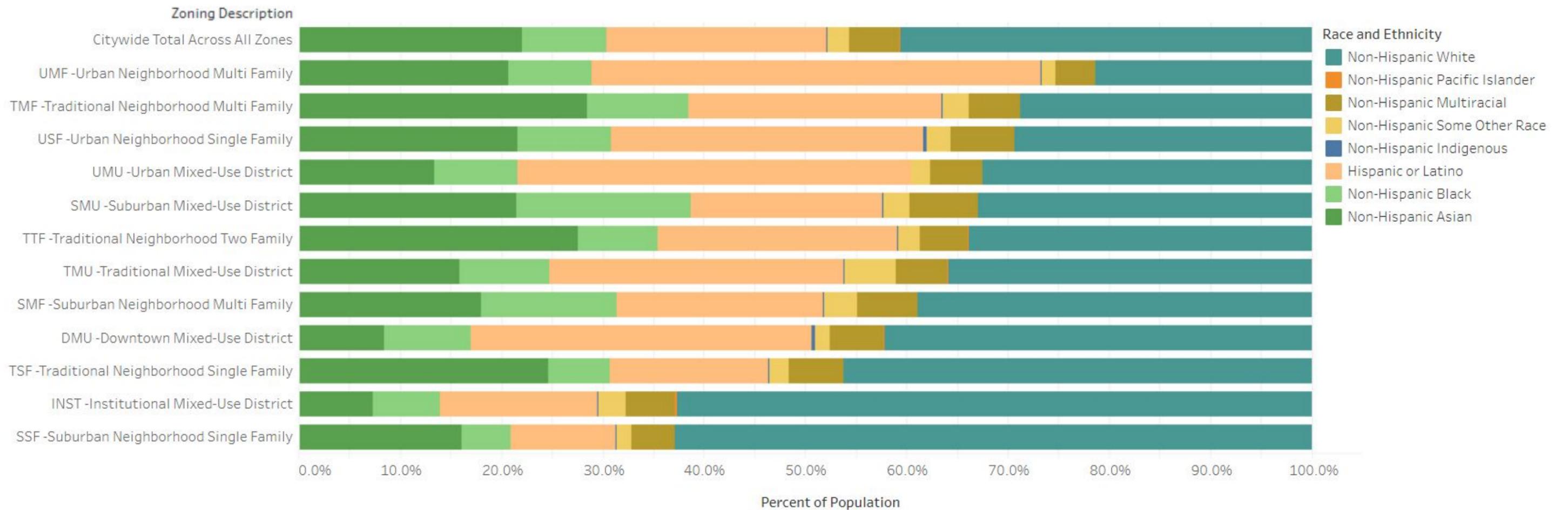
- Black/African-American
- Hispanic/Latino (of any race)
- Asian
- Other
- White (Non-Hispanic/Latino)

Sources: 2020 Decennial Census

Diversity is mostly found in denser areas.

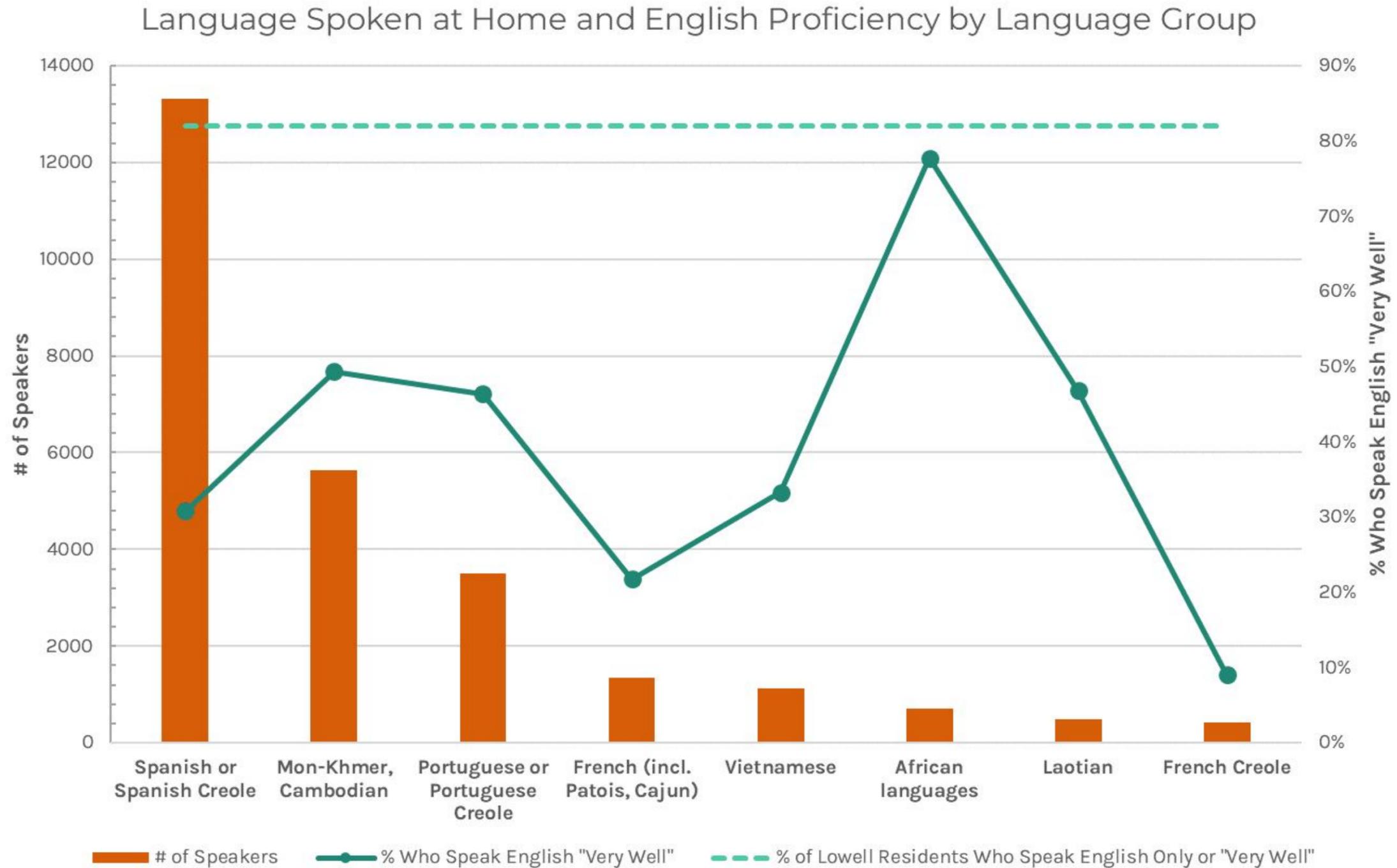
Urban Neighborhood Multifamily zone has substantially more residents of color than the city as a whole, while the Suburban Neighborhood Single Family zone has substantially fewer.

Racial Demographics of Lowell's Land Use Zones on the 2020 Census



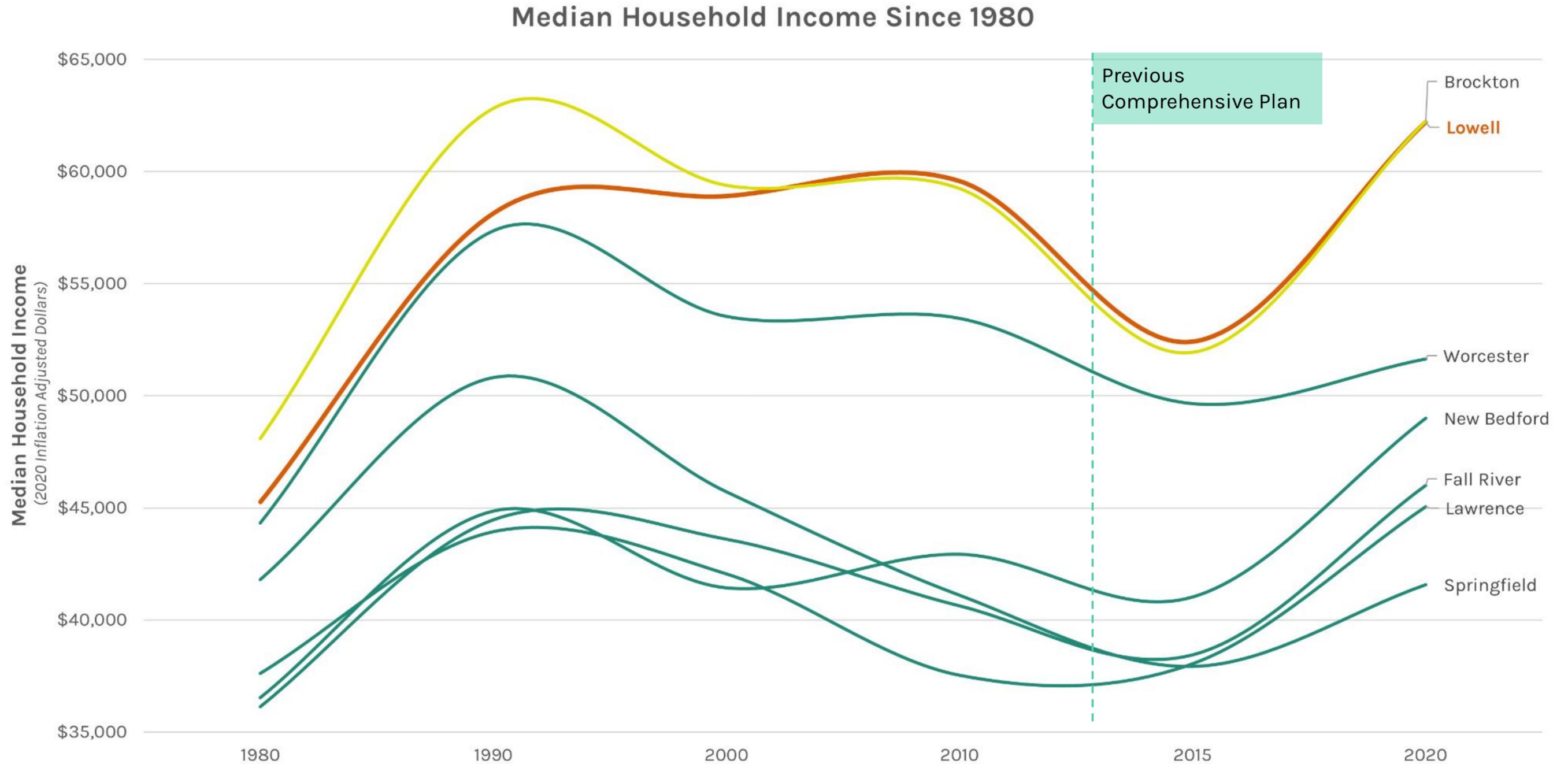
Sources: 2020 block-level census data to document the racial demographics of land use zones with 2500 or more residents

Diversity of languages is a reflection of diverse population.



Source: 2015 ACS 5-Year Estimates

Income growth in Lowell has outpaced other gateway cities.

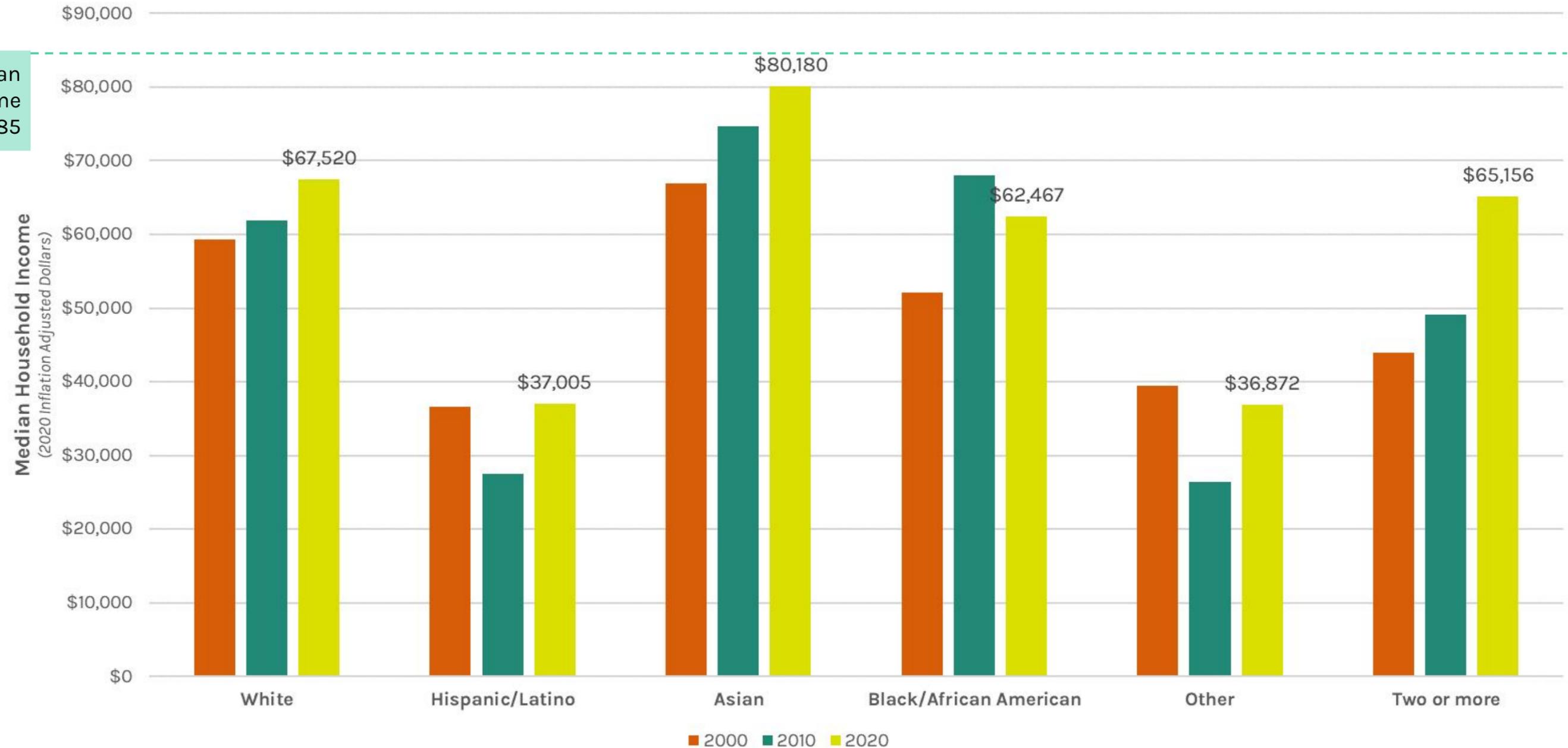


Sources: 1990 - 2010 Decennial Censuses; 2015 ACS 5-Year Estimates; 2020 ACS 5-Year Estimates

Income growth has not been experienced equitably.

Median incomes in Lowell vary by race and ethnicity.

Median Household Income by Race (2000-2020)



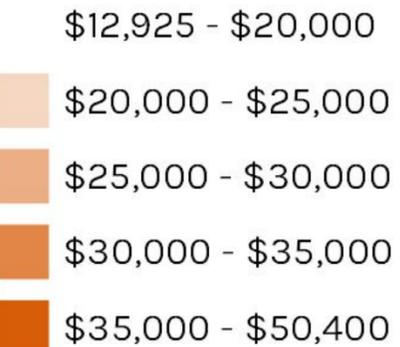
Sources: 2000 Decennial Census; 2010 ACS 5-Year Estimates; 2020 ACS 5-Year Estimates

Suburban areas are more consistently higher-income.

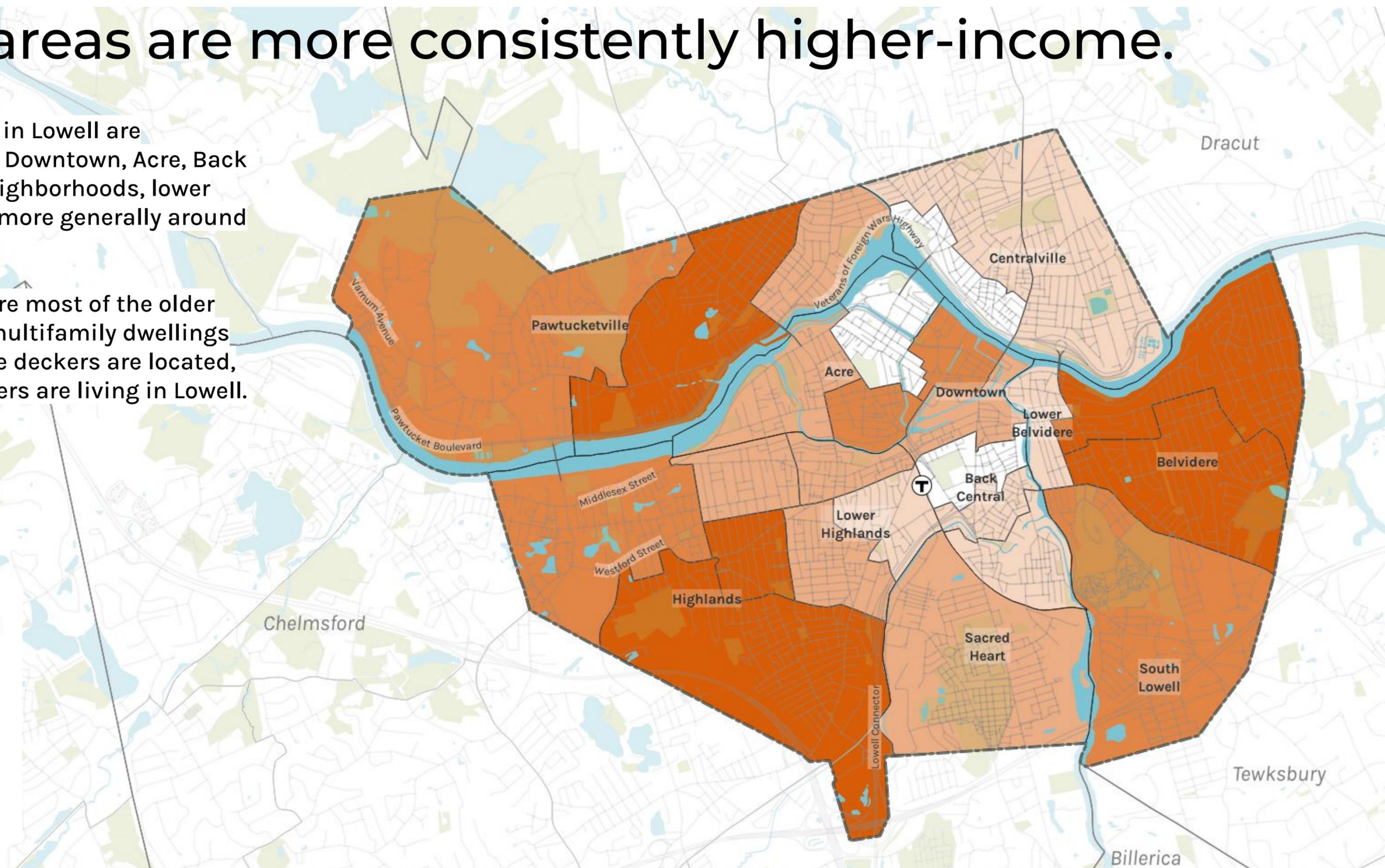
Lowest per capita incomes in Lowell are concentrated in pockets of Downtown, Acre, Back Central, Lower Belvidere neighborhoods, lower portion of Centralville and more generally around the commuter station.

This corresponds with where most of the older housing stock and small-multifamily dwellings such as duplexes and triple deckers are located, as well as where most renters are living in Lowell.

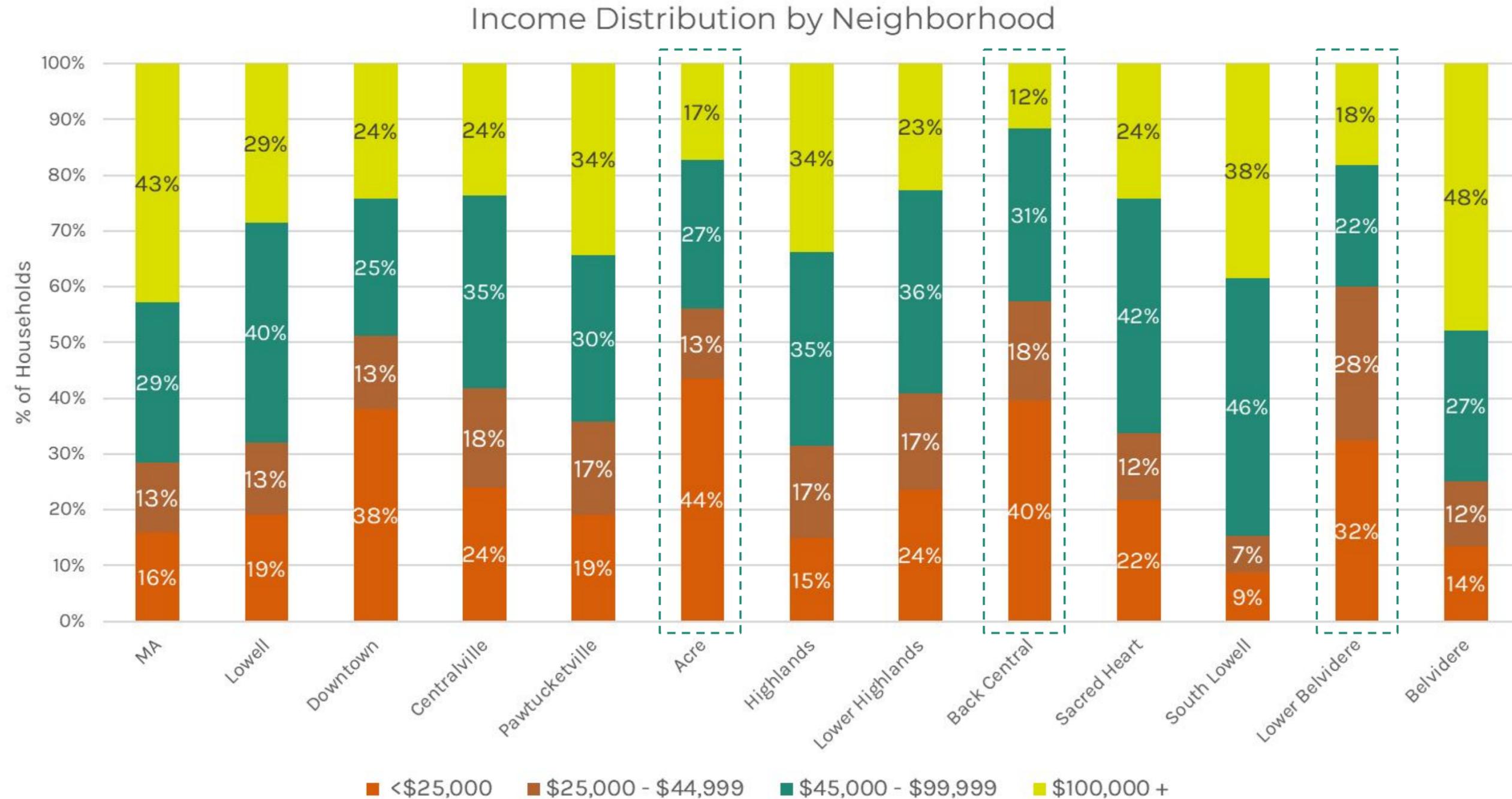
Income per Capita (2020)



Source: ACS 2020 5-Year Estimates



Denser neighborhoods are home to a wider mix of income ranges.



Source: ACS 2020 5-Year Estimates; Note: Census tract boundaries do not always line up with neighborhood boundaries. South Lowell and Belvidere percentages are approximations.

Much of Lowell's housing stock is historic.

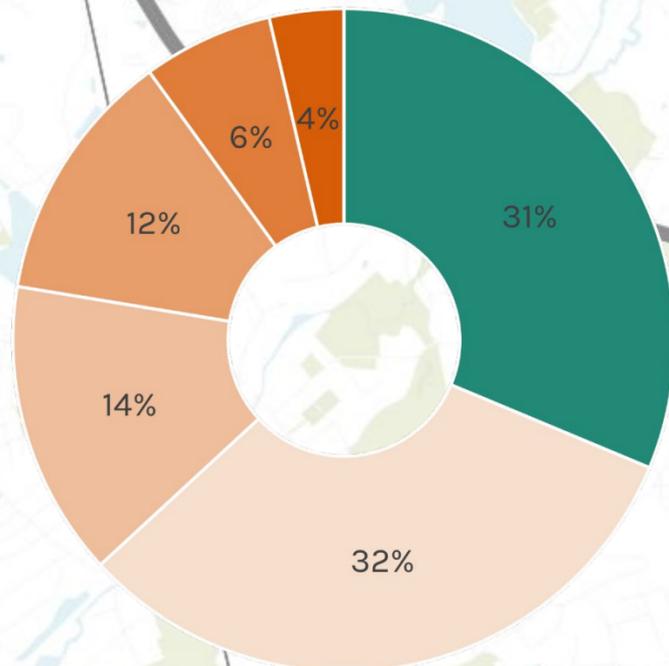
77% of Lowell's housing was built before 1960. Some of the oldest housing stock is located where communities of color reside, and where some of the lowest household incomes are present.



1986 or after



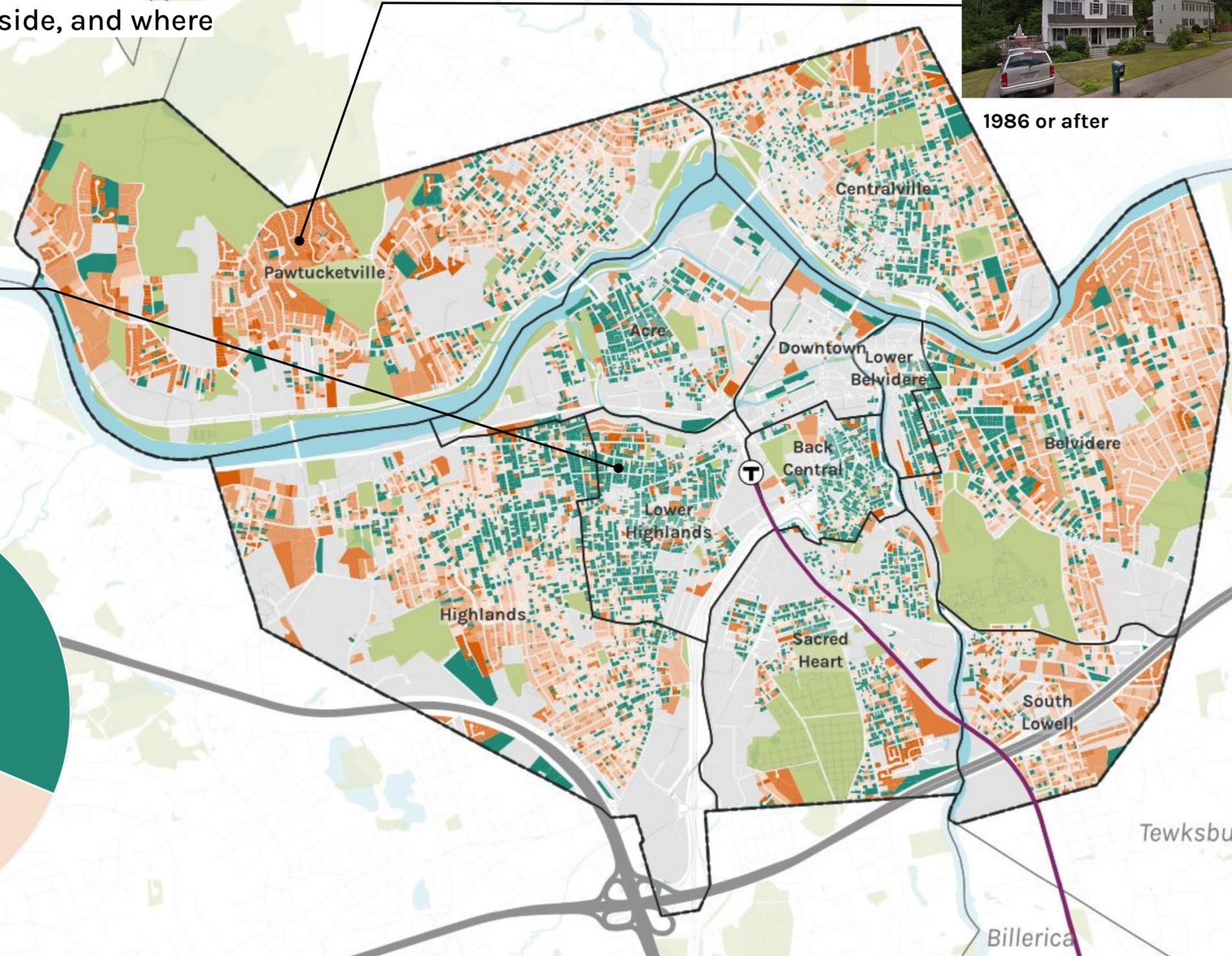
1900 or before



Year Built

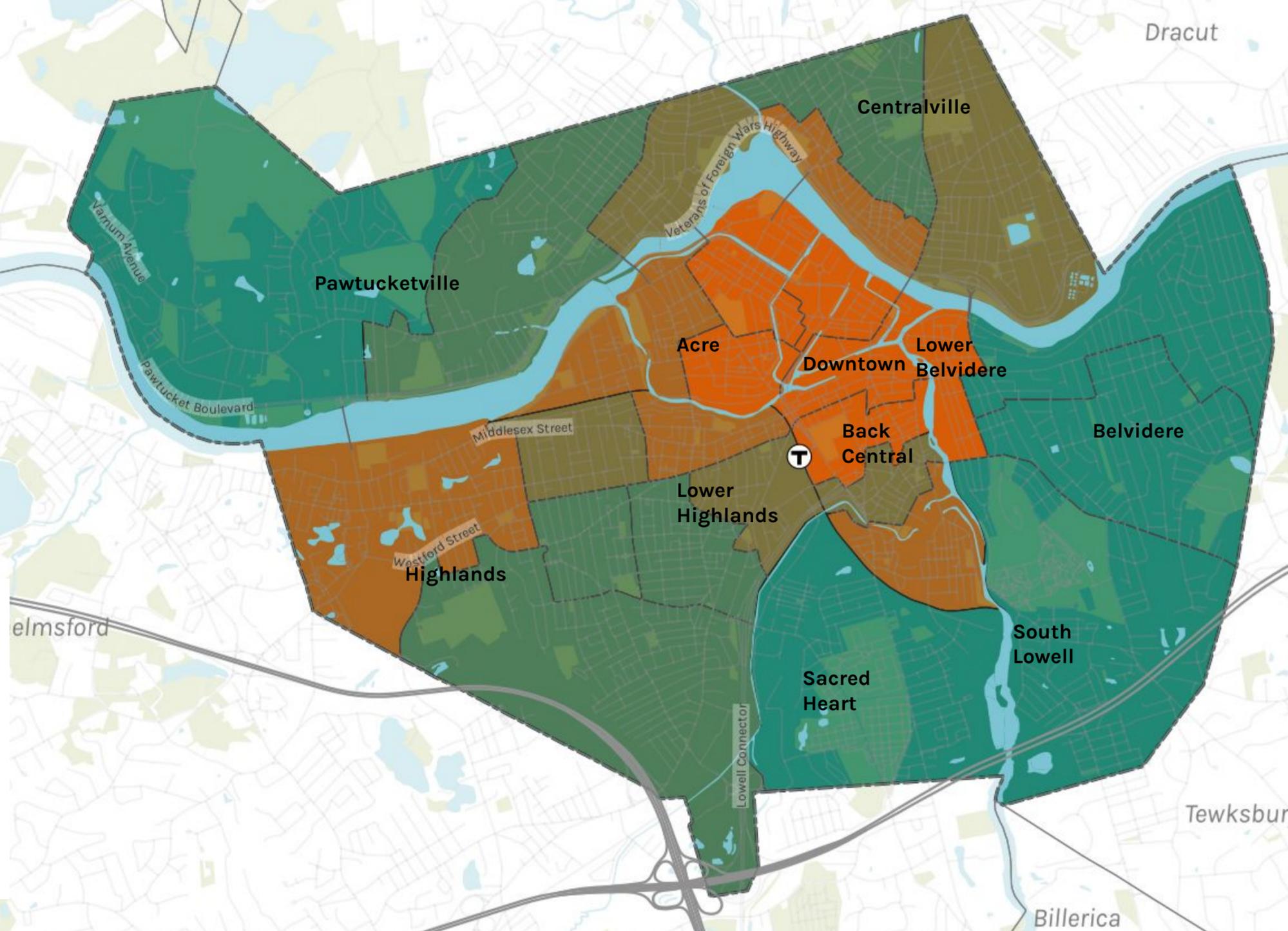
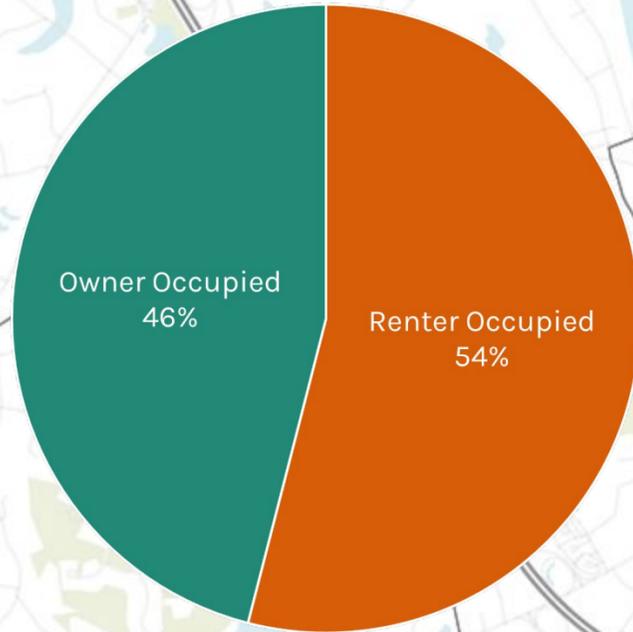
- 1900 or Before
- 1901 - 1940
- 1941 - 1960
- 1961 - 1985
- 1986 - 2000
- After 2000
- Non-Residential Land

Source: MAPC, 2020

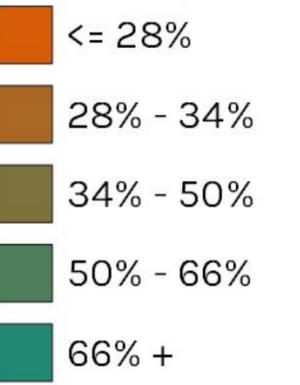


Most renters are concentrated in the urban core.

Areas in the core with more renter occupied housing have lower median incomes and more residents of color.

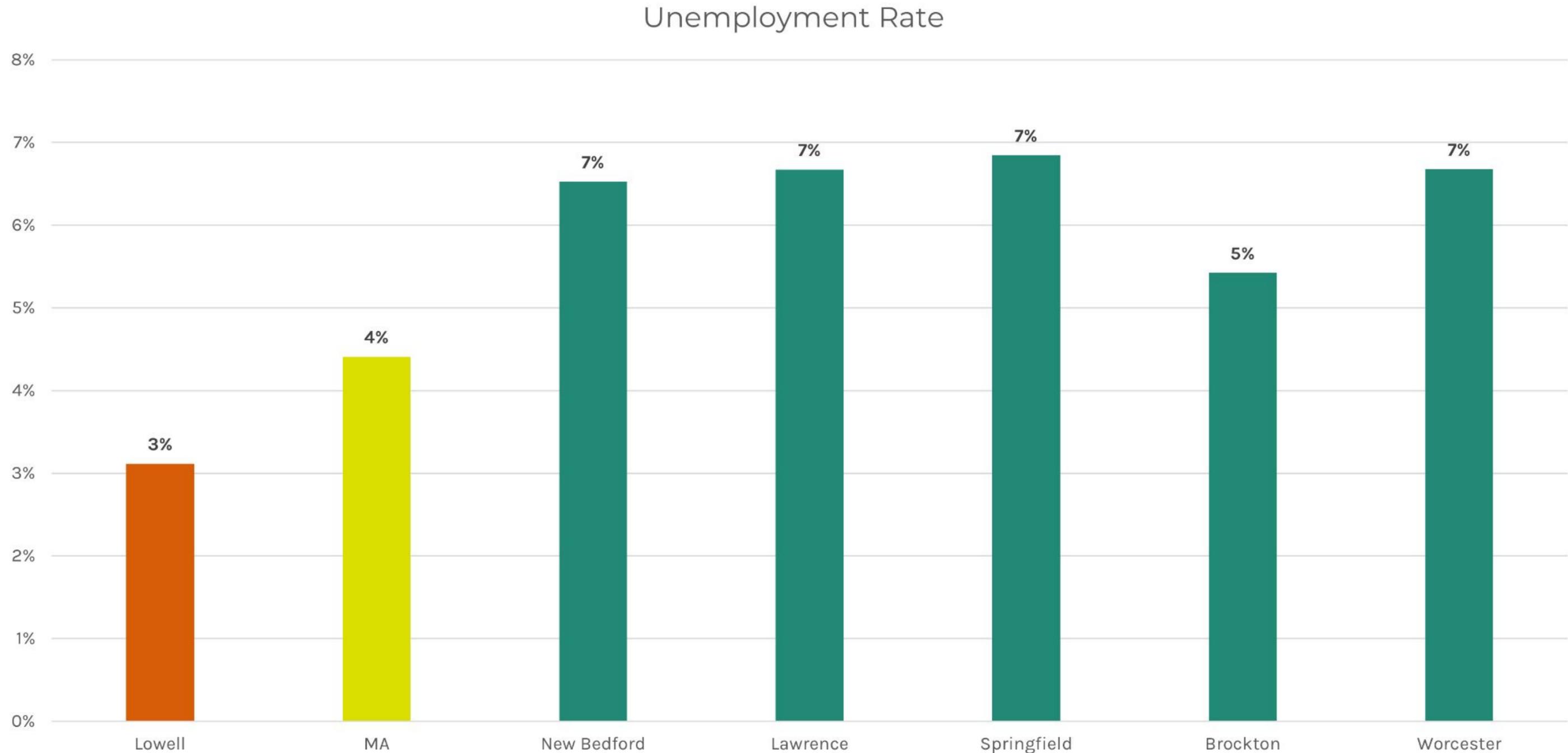


% of Population In Owner Occupied Housing



Source: ACS 2020 5-Year Estimates

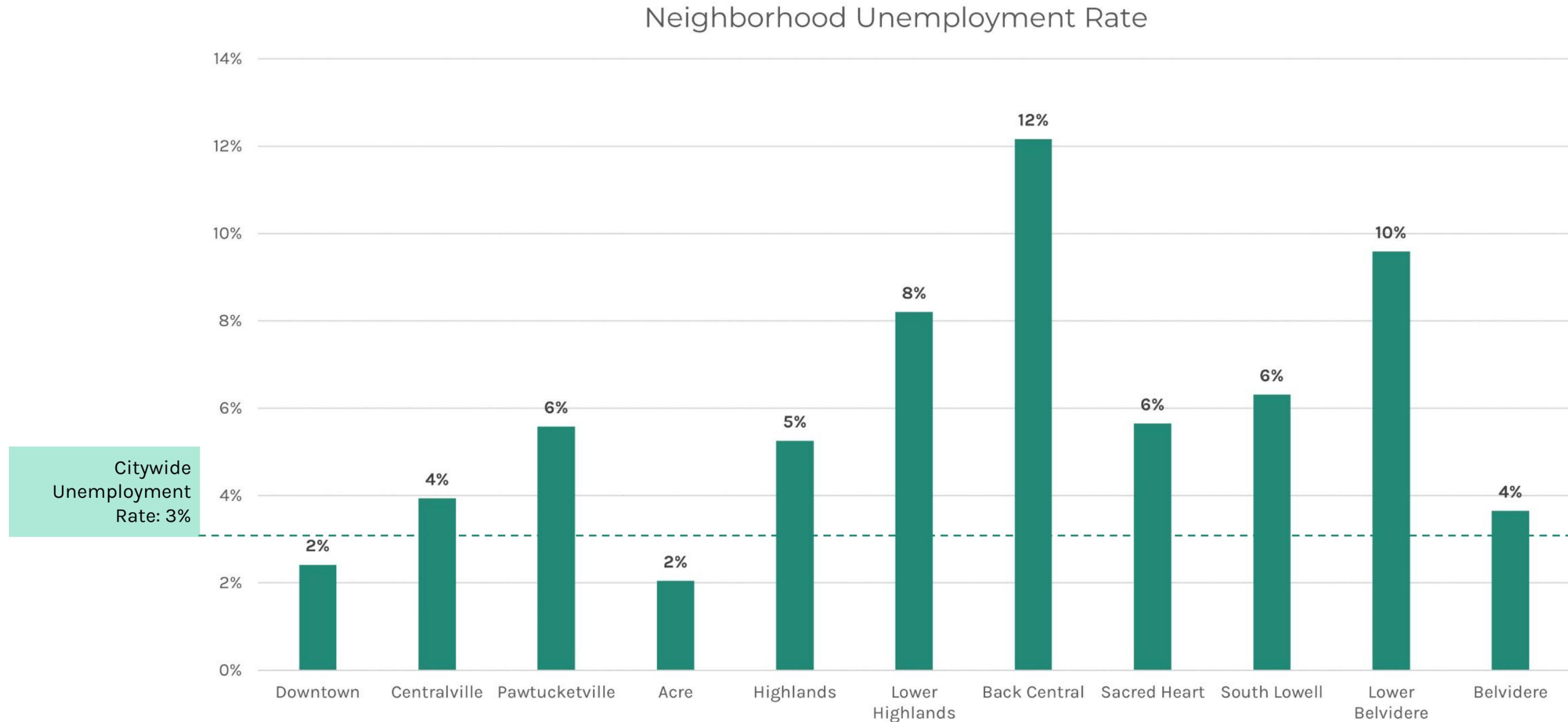
Unemployment rates are lower than other gateway cities.



Sources: ACS 2021 1-Year Estimates

But unemployment is not equally distributed within Lowell.

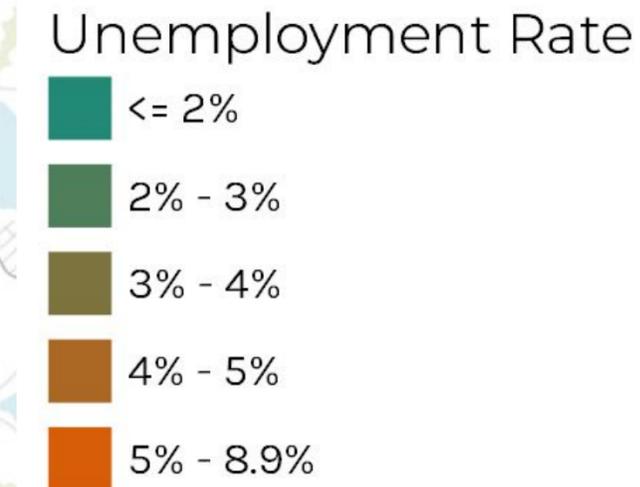
The neighborhoods with the highest unemployment rates are Back Central, Lower Belvidere and Lower Highlands



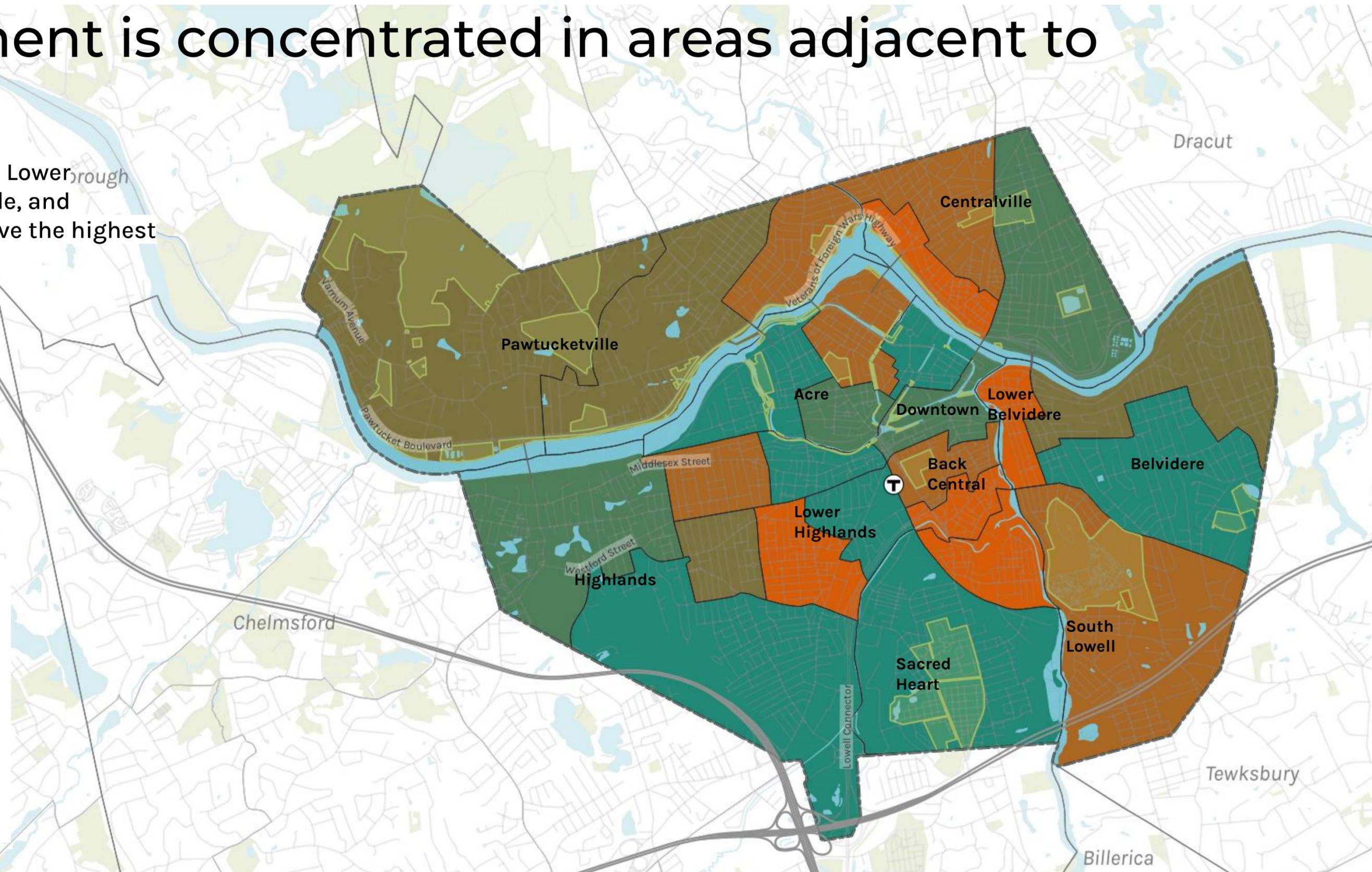
Sources: ACS 2020 5-Year Estimates

Unemployment is concentrated in areas adjacent to Downtown.

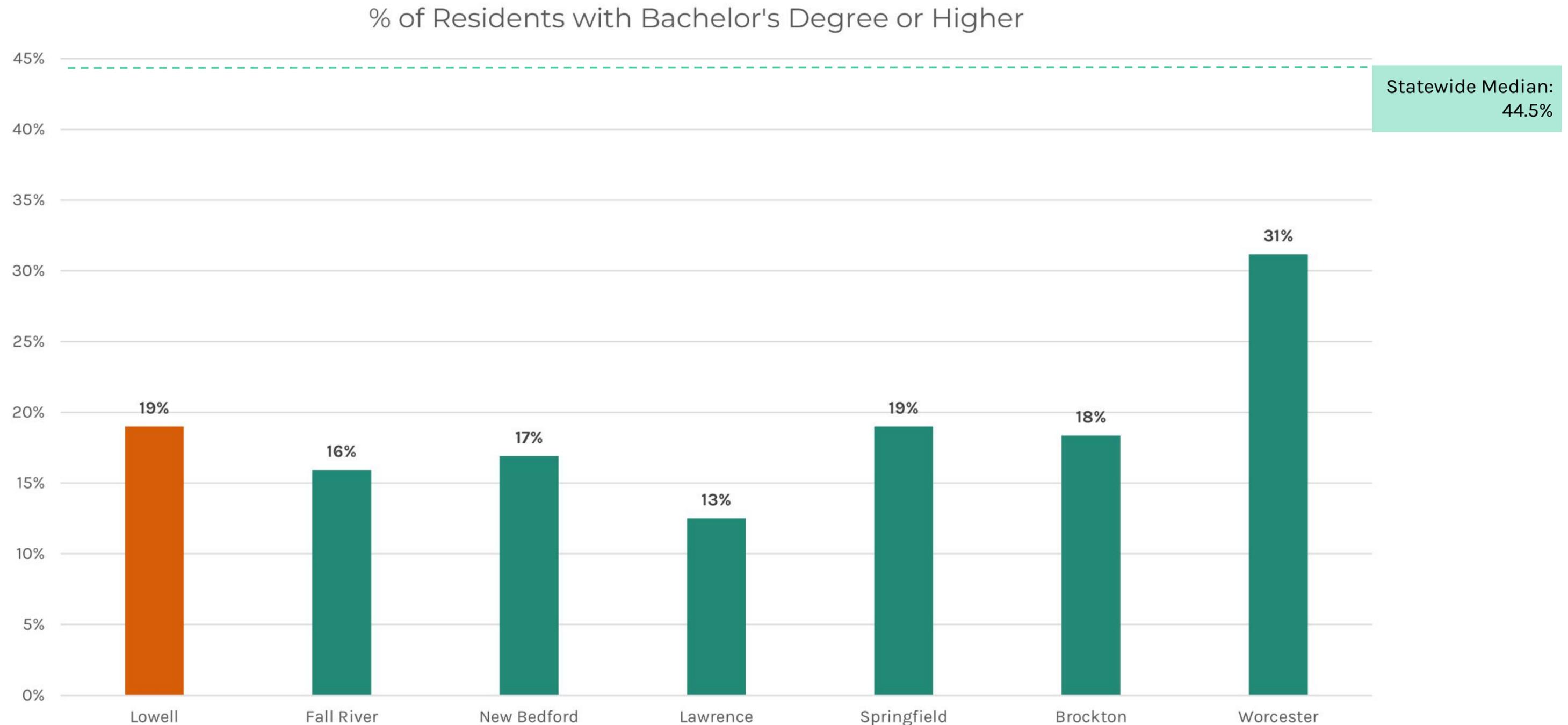
Back Central, Lower Belvidere, Lower Highlands, western Centralville, and northeastern Sacred Heart have the highest unemployment rates.



Source: ACS 2020 5-Year Estimates

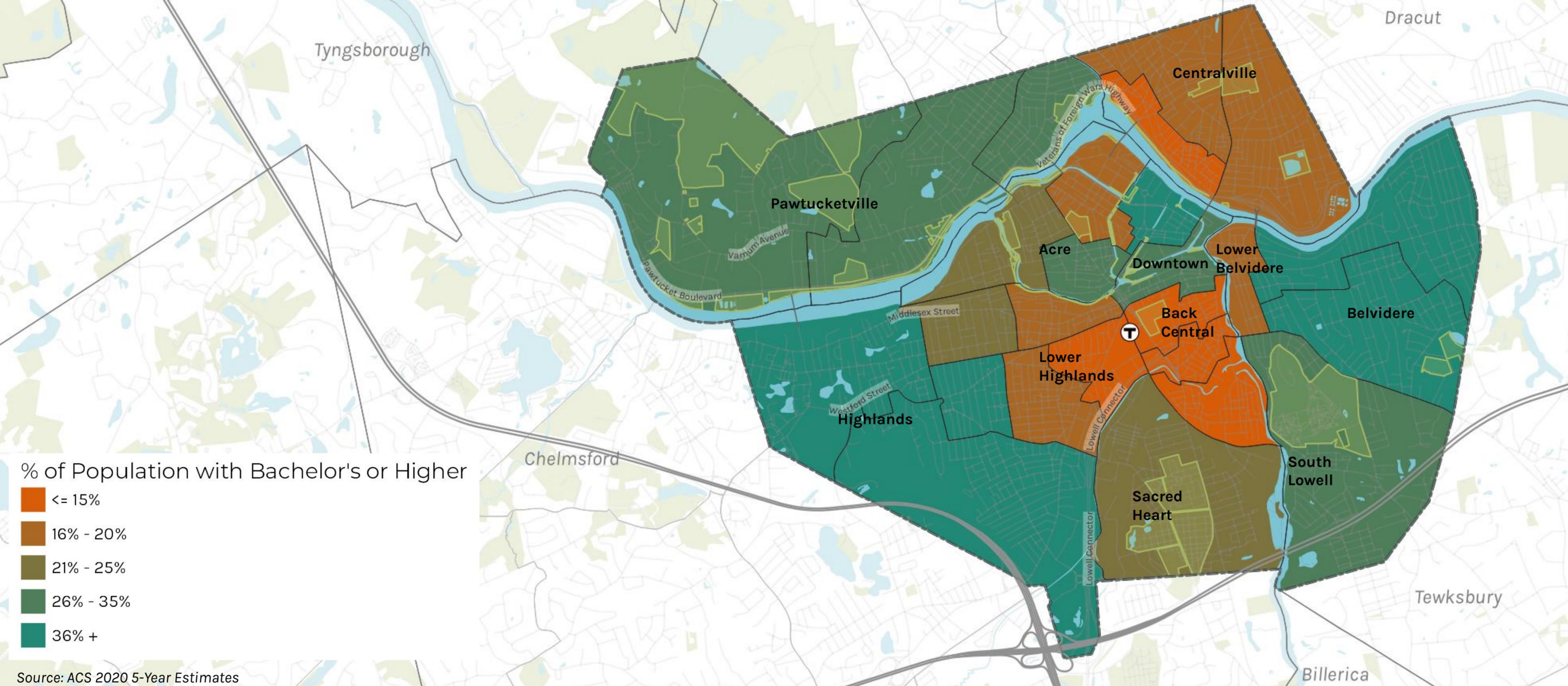


Overall, level of educational is similar to other gateway cities.



Sources: ACS 2020 5-Year Estimates

Educational attainment follows the pattern of income.



% of Population with Bachelor's or Higher

- <= 15%
- 16% - 20%
- 21% - 25%
- 26% - 35%
- 36% +

Source: ACS 2020 5-Year Estimates

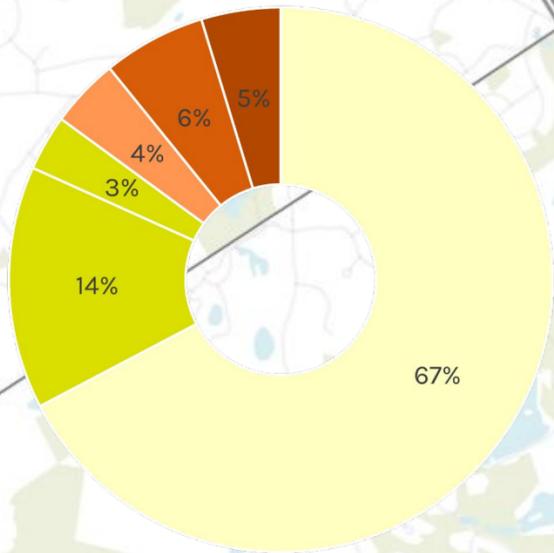
Housing

Housing is an important topic that has not been adequately represented in any current Lowell plan. The planning team is working closely with the Housing Production Plan, happening in parallel, which will dive deeper into housing challenges and opportunities.

- How has the regional housing crisis impacted Lowell?
- How does housing relate to job creation, demographics, or income?
- What kinds of housing currently exist in Lowell, and where?

Multifamily is not exclusive to the Downtown Core.

67% of Lowell's residential land contains single-family housing.



- Single Family
- Duplex
- Triple-Decker
- 4-8 Units
- 9-15 Units
- 16+ Units
- Non-Residential Land

Source: MAPC, 2020

Tyngsborough



Single Family



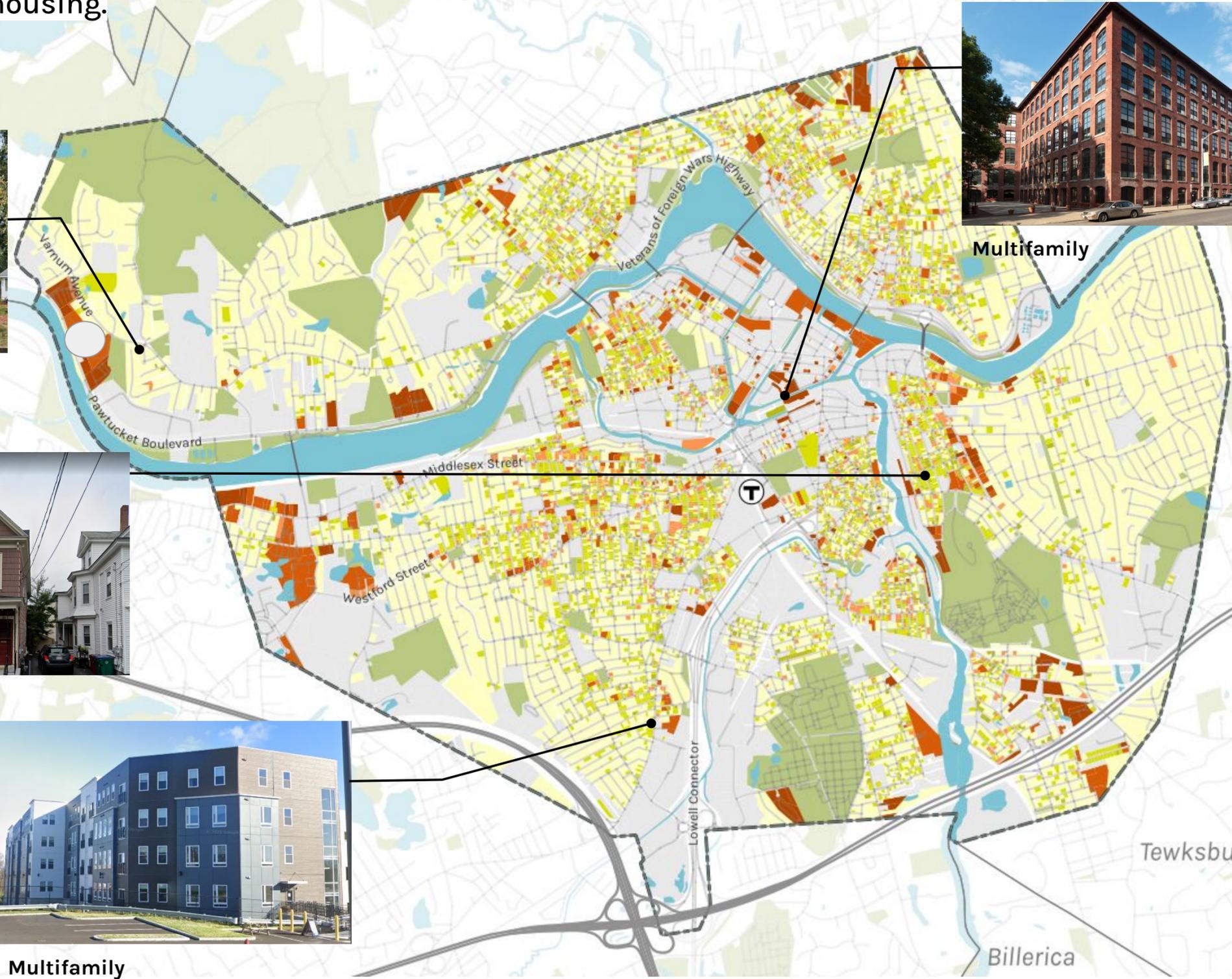
Duplex / Triple-Decker



Multifamily



Multifamily



Neighborhoods separated by infrastructure and industrial land barriers.

Do the industrial/post industrial gaps impact between neighborhoods and with downtown?
Does it impact access to the commuter station?

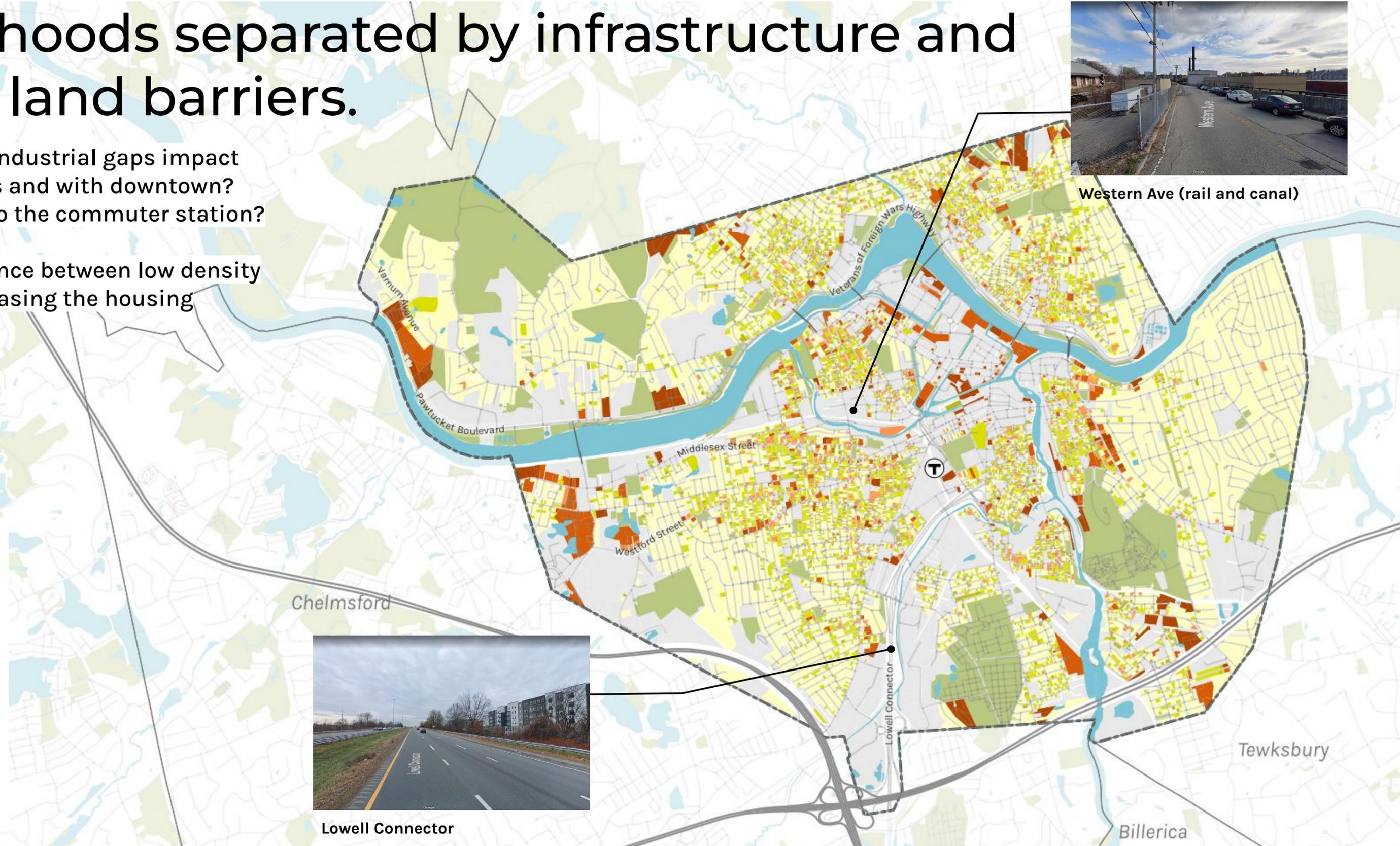
What is the proper balance between low density industrial uses vs increasing the housing supply?



Western Ave (rail and canal)

- Single Family
- Duplex
- Triple-Decker
- 4-8 Units
- 9-15 Units
- 16+ Units
- Non-Residential Land

Source: MAPC, 2020



Lowell Connector

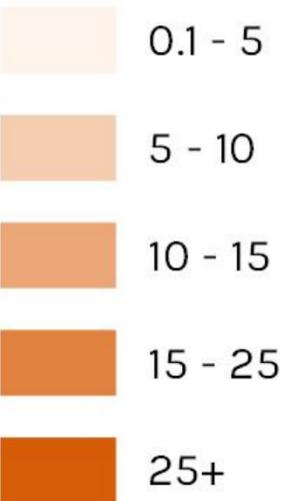
Density is concentrated in the historic parts of Lowell.

There are a number of larger-scale multi-family housing developments that have been constructed on larger parcels along the river and at the edges of the city.

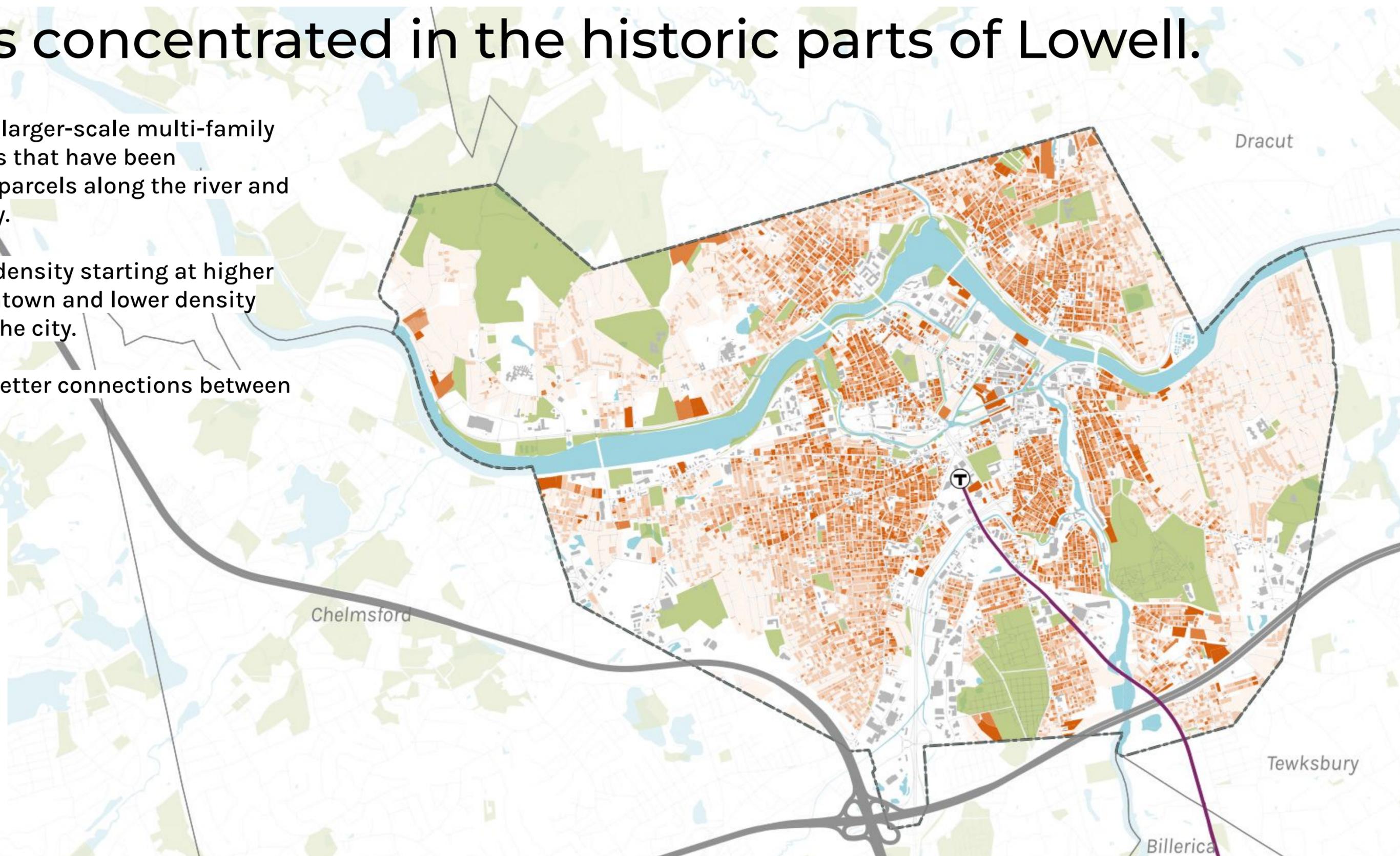
There is a gradient of density starting at higher density closer to downtown and lower density towards the edges of the city.

Is there potential for better connections between dense areas?

Units per Acre



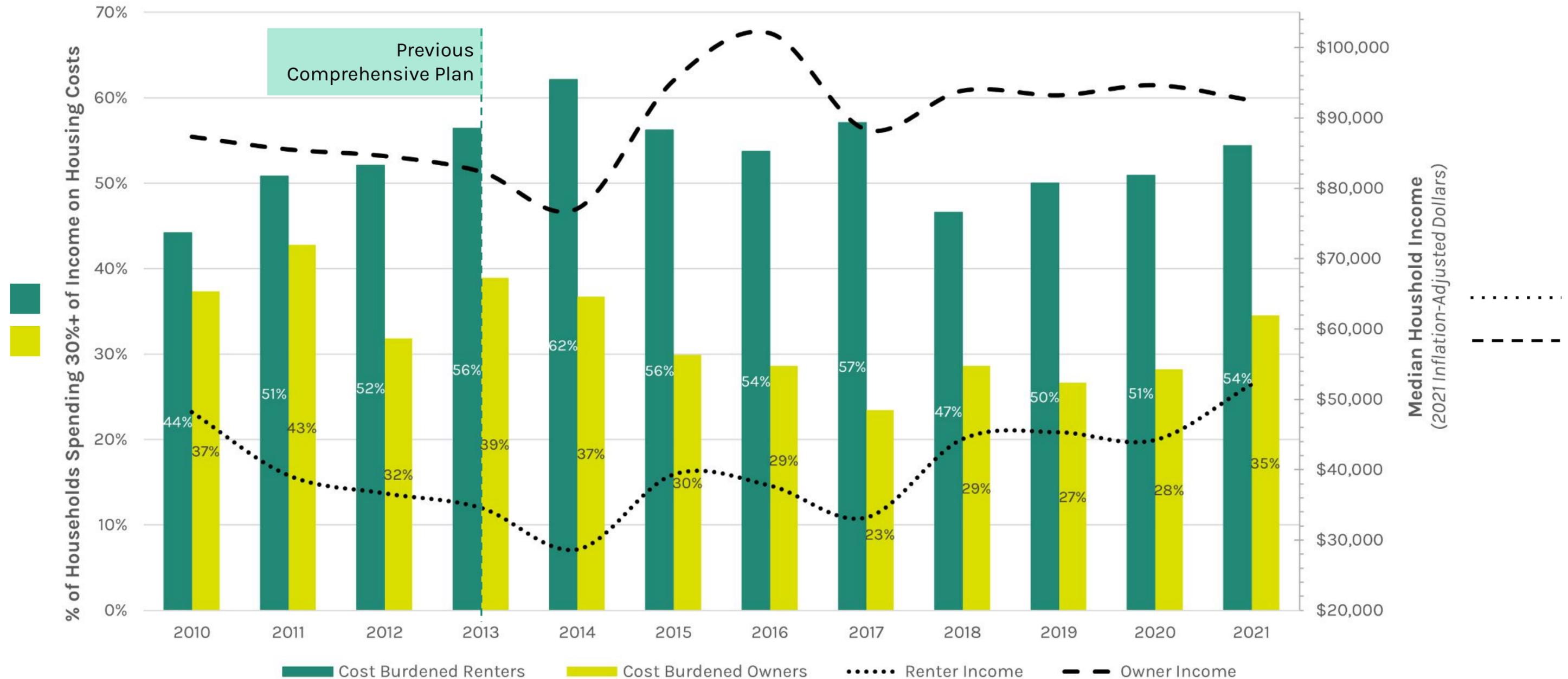
Source: MAPC, 2020



Renters are more cost-burdened as incomes stagnate.

In 2021, 54% of renter households and 35% of owner households spent more than 30% of their income on housing costs.

Cost Burdened Households & Household Incomes

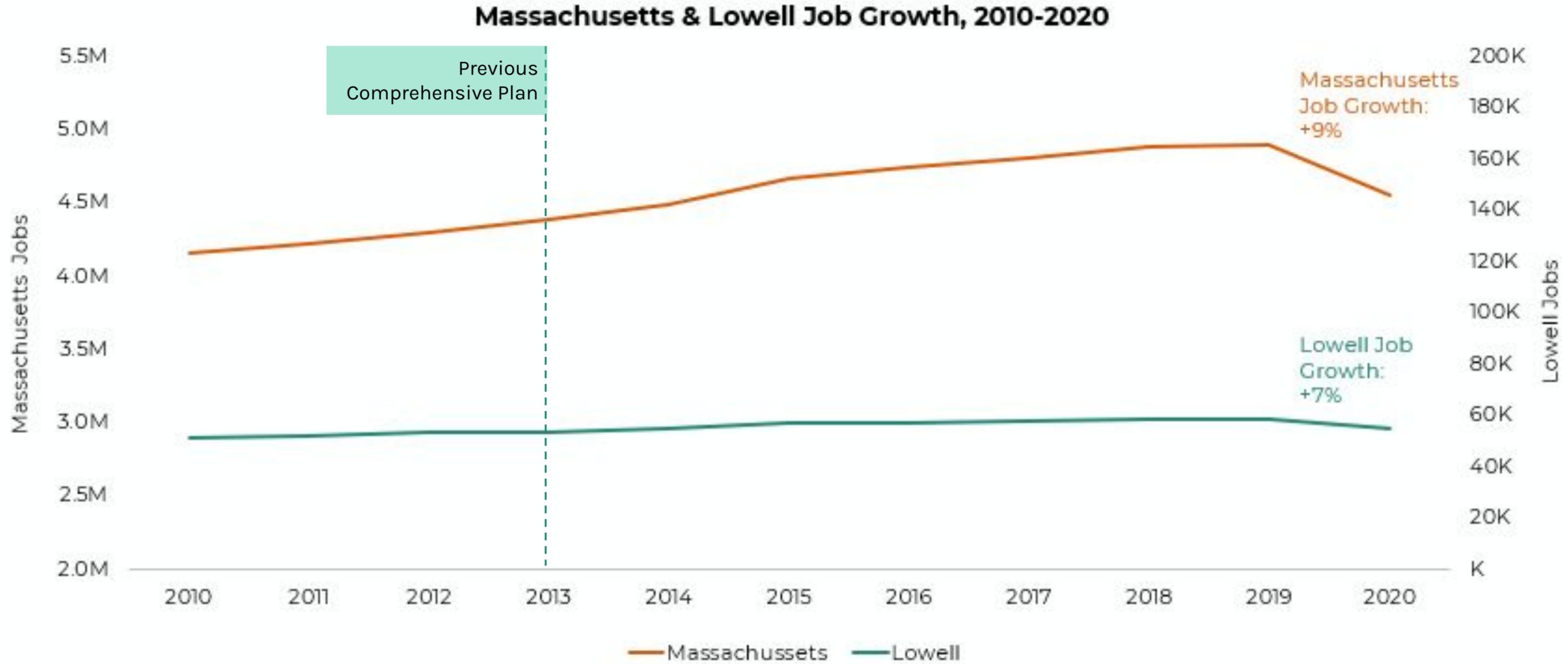


Sources: ACS 1-Year Estimates; Note: "Cost burdened" is defined as a household spending 30% or more of gross income on housing costs

Economic Development

- What sub-industries, occupations, or job clusters are growing, well-paying, and suited to the Lowell workforce (in terms of training, education)?
- What are emerging challenges for businesses related to COVID?
- What sets Lowell apart in the region? How can Lowell leverage its location to benefit the community?
- How does land use (balance of housing/commercial/industrial) relate to economic development and fiscal sustainability?

Jobs have grown slightly less in Lowell than statewide



Source: Lightcast

Healthcare-related occupations* have been some of the fastest growing jobs in Lowell in the past decade

While earnings for those jobs only just exceed the citywide median annual income, other fast-growing occupations in management and finance provide higher levels of income.

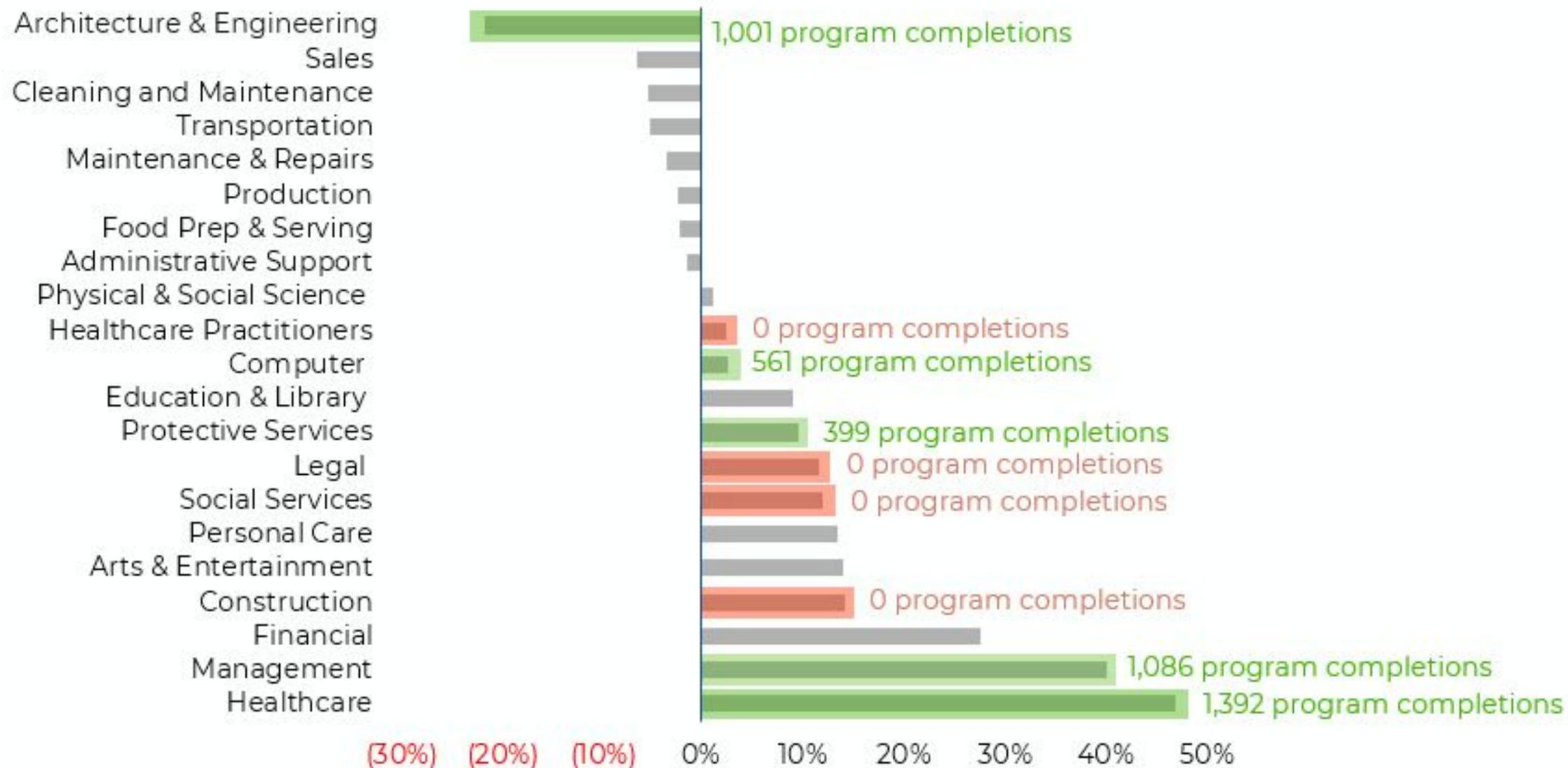


Source: Lightcast; *Healthcare-related occupations, such as Home Health Aids, Nursing Assistants, and Dental Assistants, are distinguished from healthcare practitioners, such as doctors, dentists, pharmacists, or therapists.

Lowell institutions provide training that aligns with some in-demand jobs

Lowell institutions successfully provide training that aligns with some in-demand jobs, such as those in healthcare-related occupations, but do not offer programs for other in-demand occupations, such as those in legal professions, social services, and construction.

Job Growth by Occupation 2010-2020



Source: Lightcast; *Completions refers to the number of degrees or certificates conferred for a specific course of study in a given year. Includes Associate, Bachelor, Master, and Doctorate degree completions from UMass Lowell

Businesses in downtown have been impacted by COVID.

Total Number of Businesses in Study Area

666



Percentage of Businesses Operating at Reduced Capacity Due to COVID (survey data)

63%



Number of Vacant Storefronts Observed

73



The top 4 business impacts due to COVID-19 were:

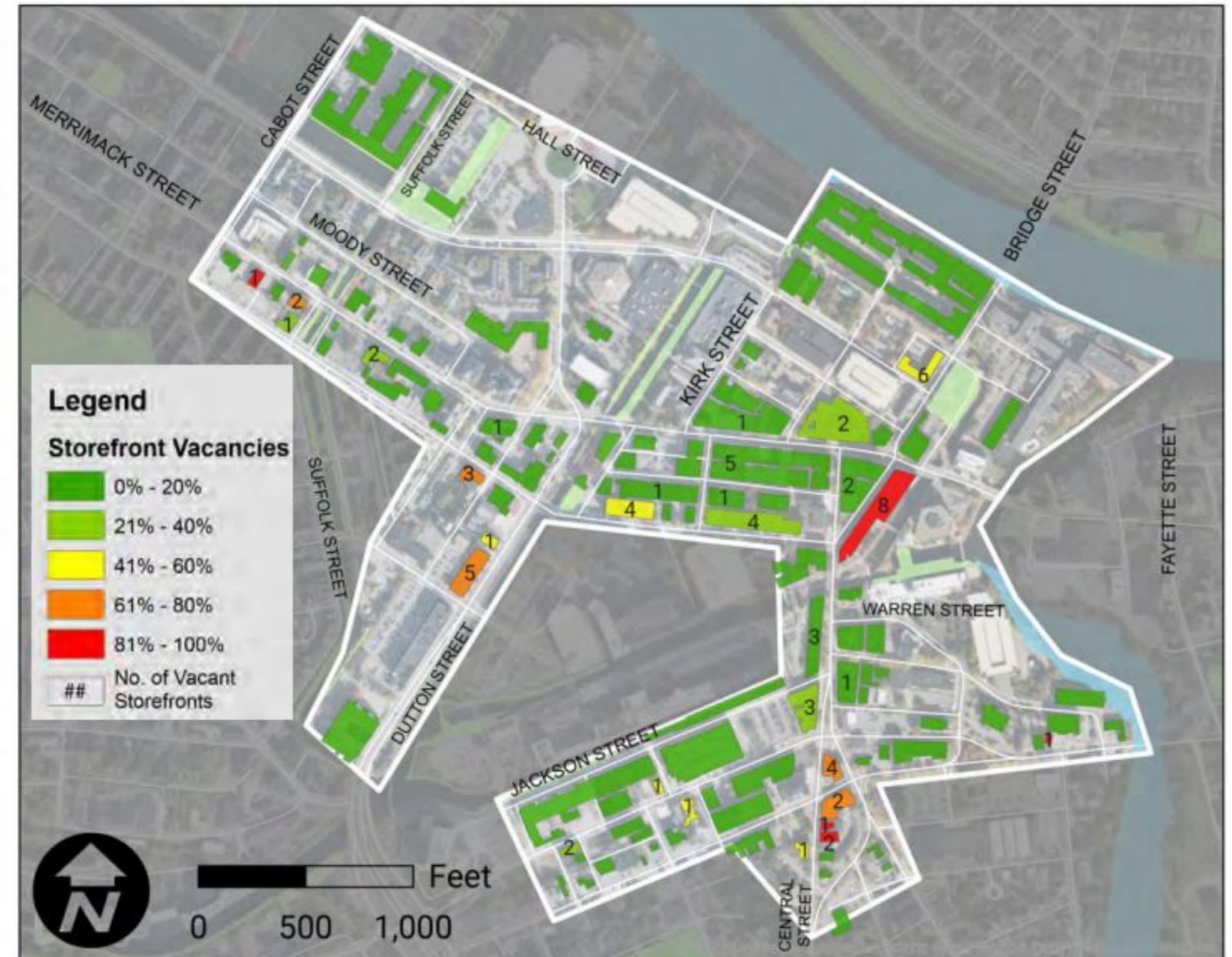
- Revenue Decline (70%)
- Reduced Operating Hours/Capacity (67%)
- Incurred Expense to Implement Safety Measures (60%)
- Temporary or Permanent Business Closure (53%)

79% of businesses had fewer on-site customers in January and February of 2021 than before COVID.

67% of businesses generated less revenue in 2020 than they did in 2019. For **48%** of businesses, revenue declined by 25% or more.

44% of businesses established alternative modes to sell and deliver products.

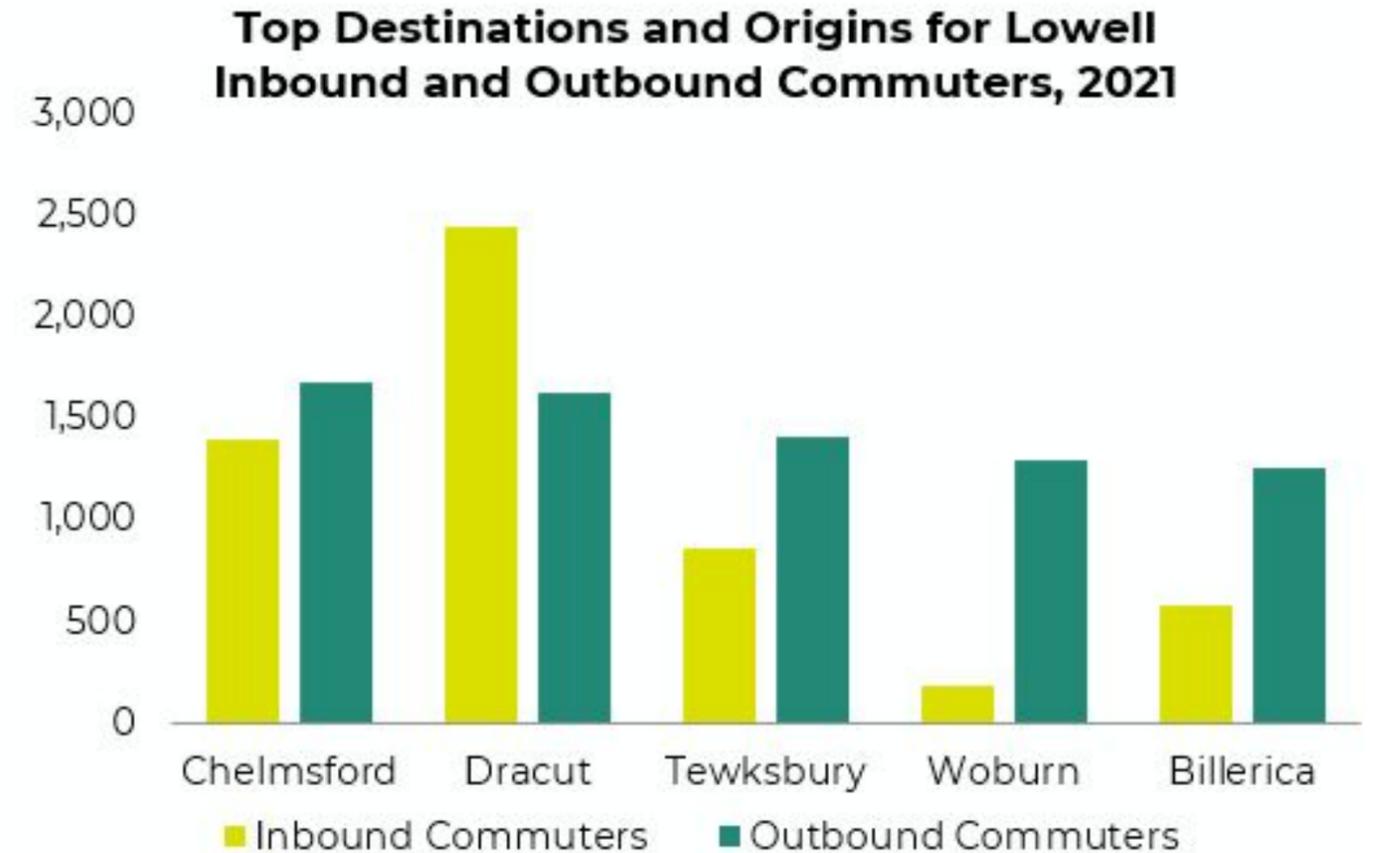
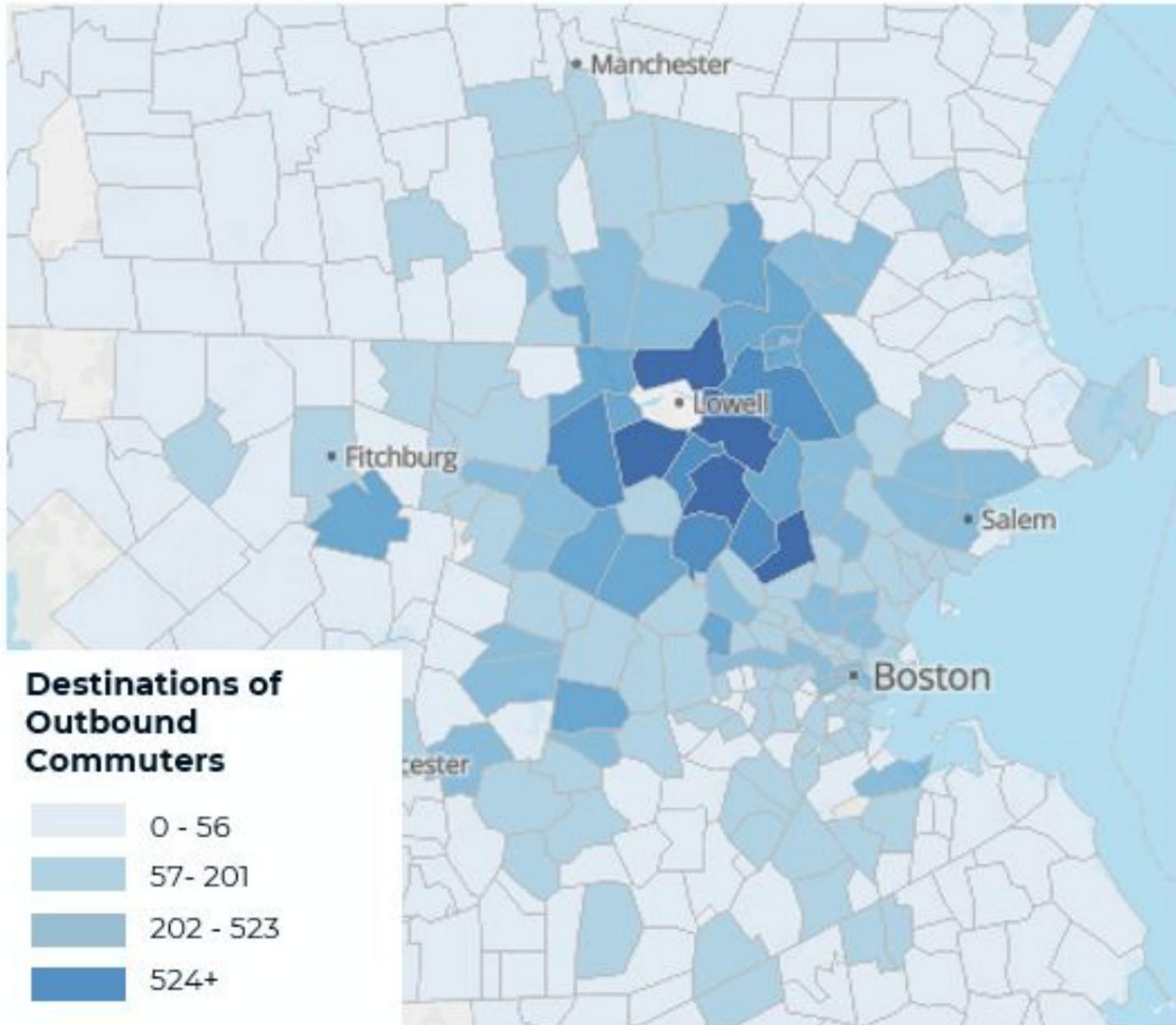
60% of businesses were still operating at reduced hours/capacity (March/April 2021)



Sources: Rapid Recovery Plan for Downtown

Commuting patterns are concentrated in surrounding areas.

The most common inbound and outbound commuting destinations are in the area immediately surrounding Lowell. Just 5% of outbound commuters go into Boston for work.



33,057
Total Inbound Commuters 2020

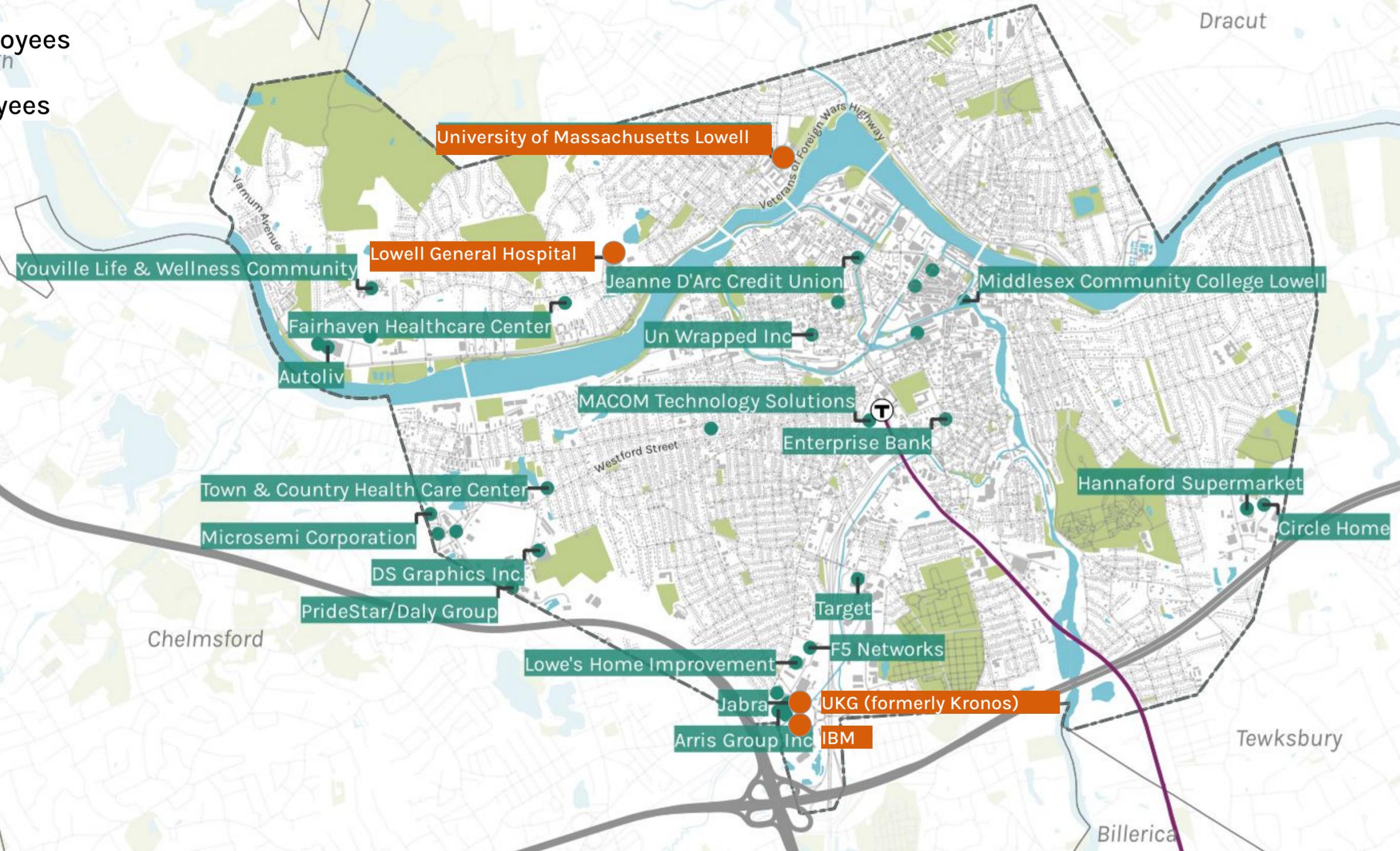
35,483
Total Outbound Commuters 2020

Source: Lightcast

Lowell is home to a large number of anchor institutions.

Top 5 Employers

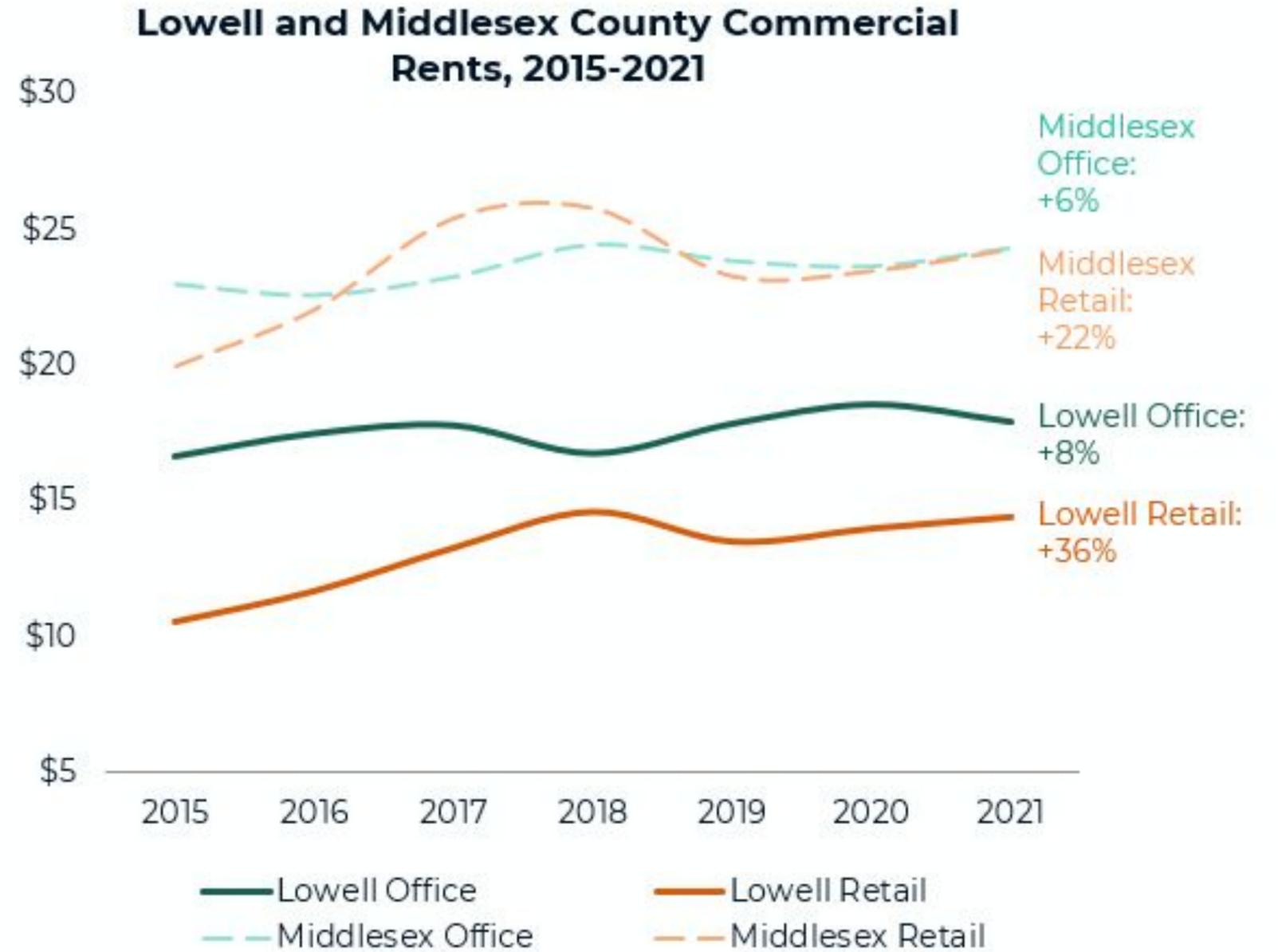
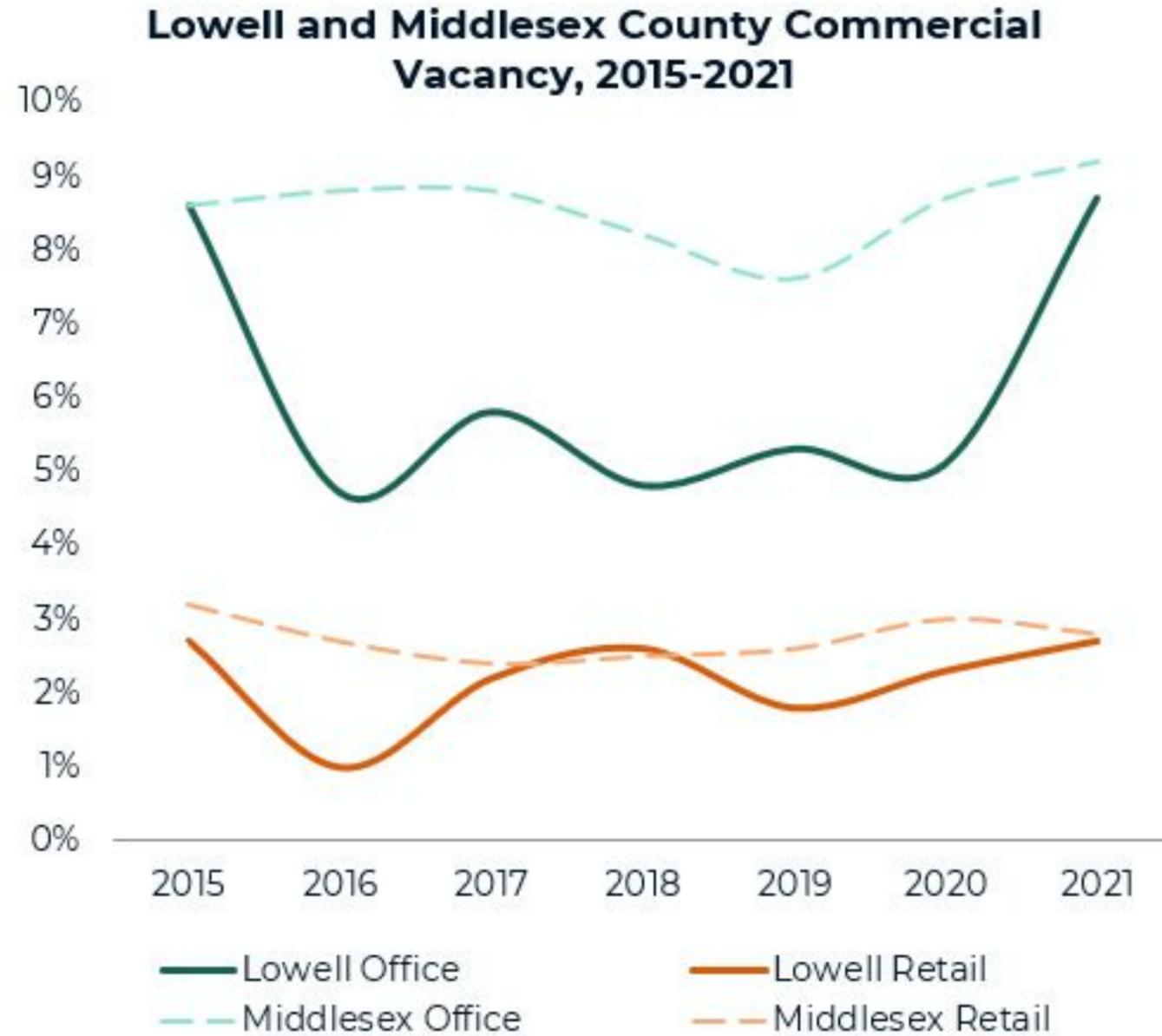
1. Lowell General Hospital - 3,704 employees
2. UMass Lowell - 2,260 employees
3. UKG (formerly Kronos) - 1,637 employees
4. Market Basket - 1,094 employees
5. IBM - 849 employees



Source: GoLowell

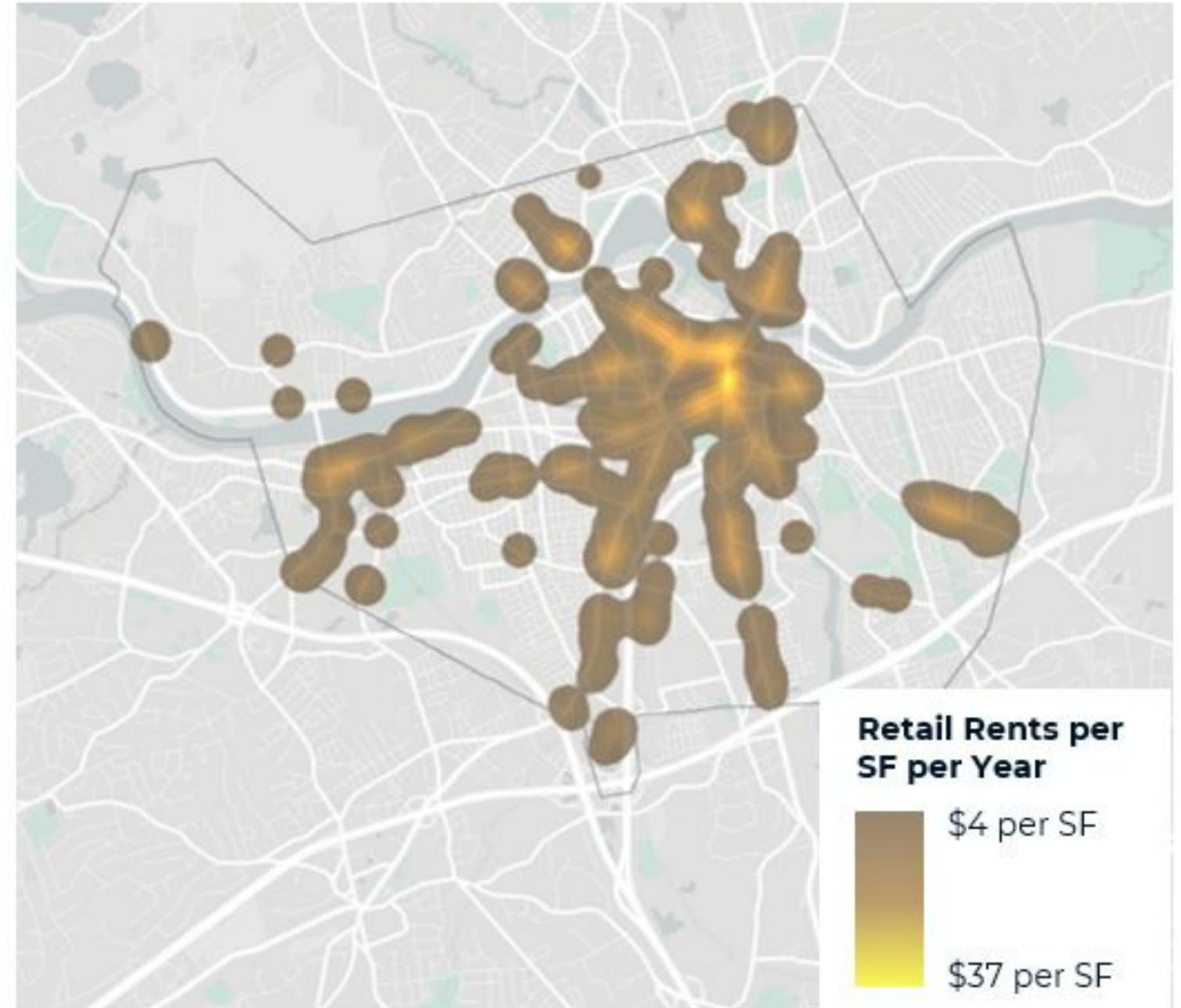
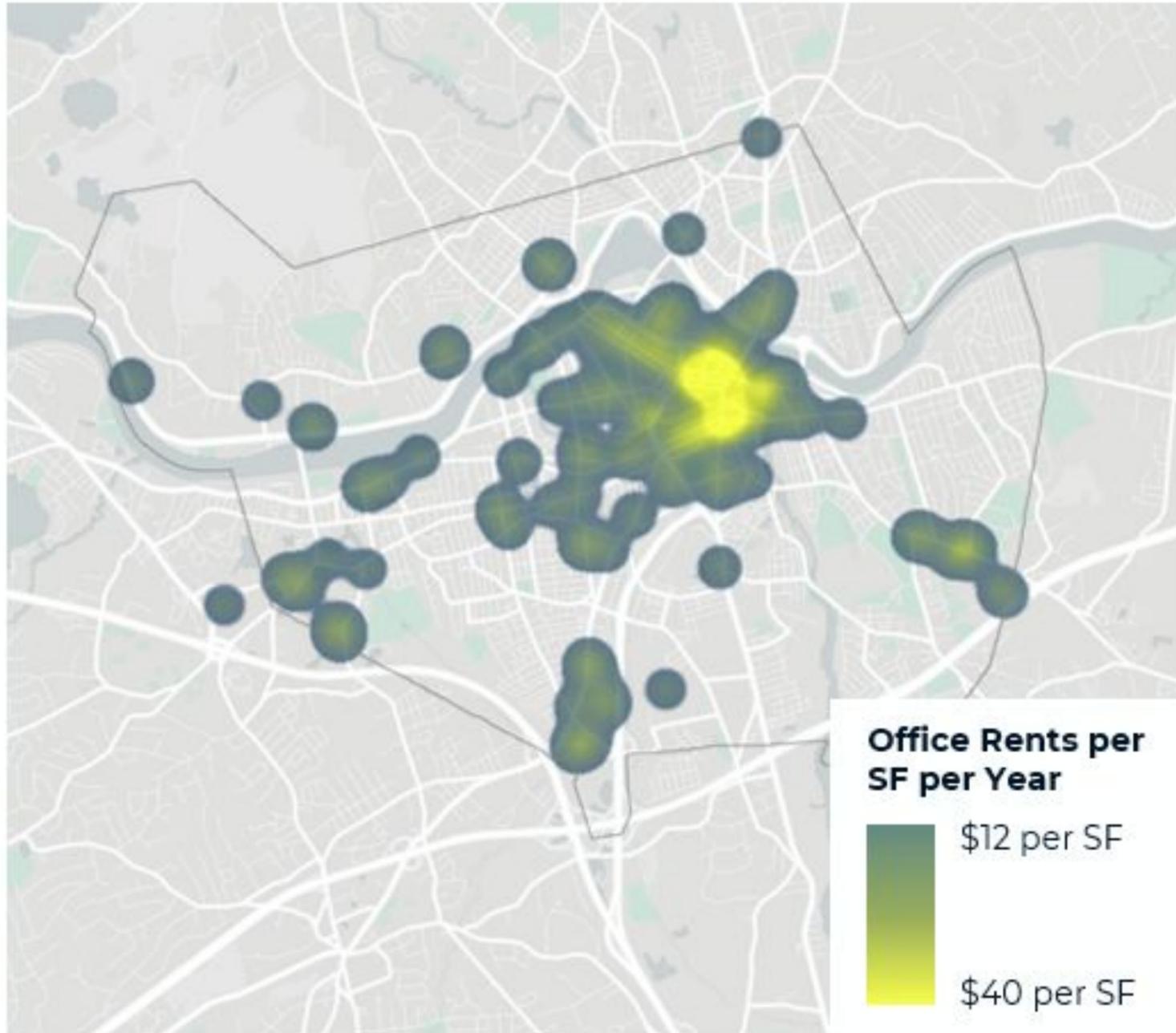
Lowell's rent growth compares favorably to the county.

Although Lowell's office and retail uses have seen slightly more volatile vacancy rates than the surrounding County, office and retail rents have grown more in the past six years than throughout the County.



Source: CoStar

Downtown commands the highest office and retail rents.

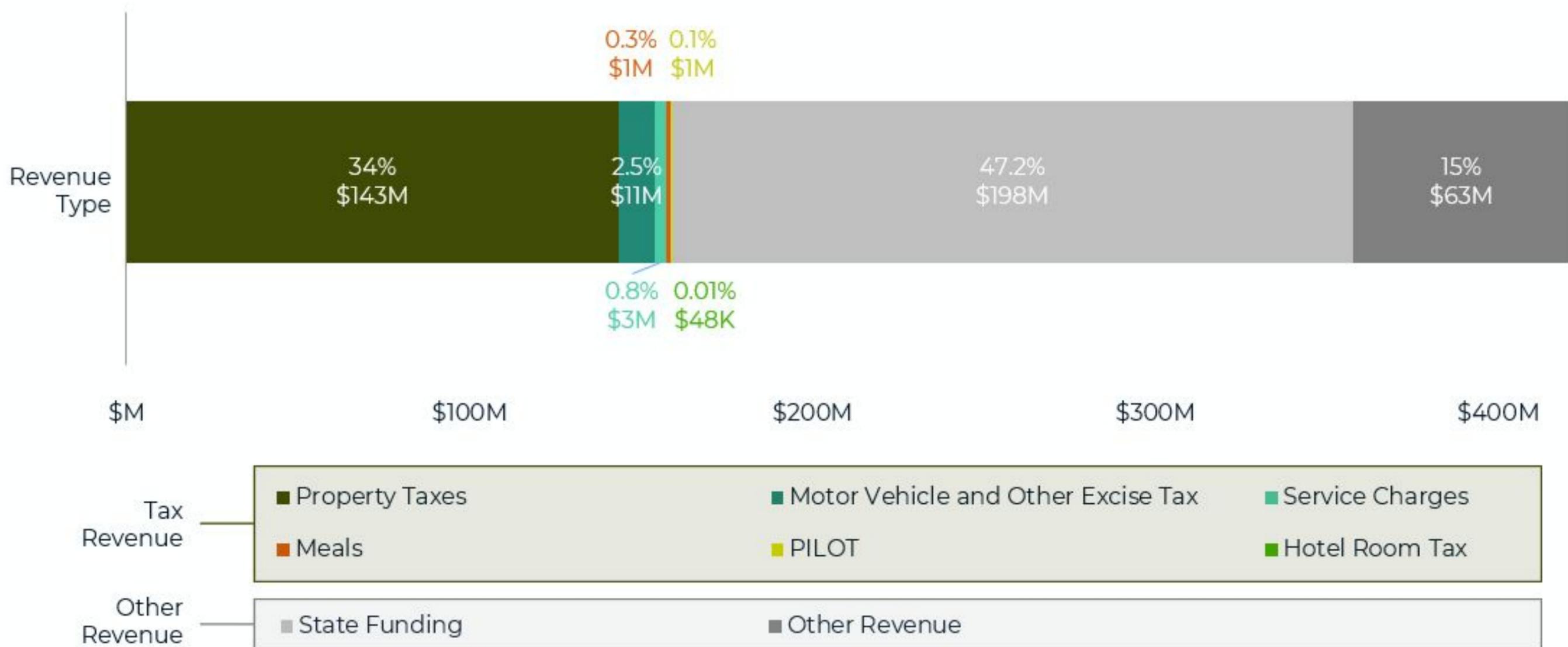


Source: CoStar & ArcGIS

Land use is related to fiscal sustainability.

Most of Lowell's tax revenue comes from its property tax base. Investments in development, infrastructure, and amenities can support property values, and in turn, generate greater resources for public services.

City of Lowell Revenues, FY 2021



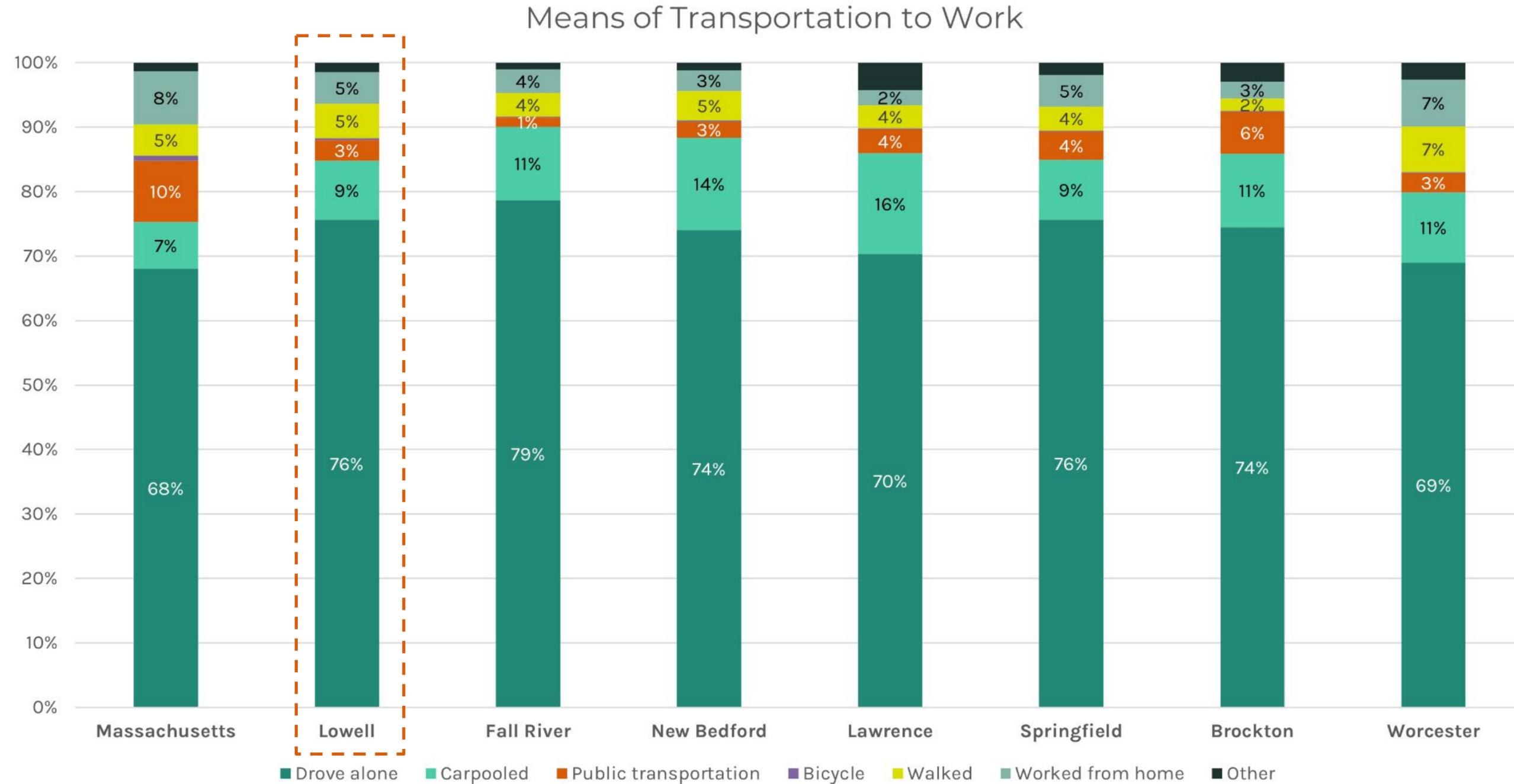
Source: City of Lowell; *Other revenue primarily consists of intergovernmental revenue, license/permit revenue, and investment income.

Mobility

Lack of accessibility and equity of available travel options is a persisting challenge in Lowell. However, there are various initiatives planned and underway to improve transportation and mobility options across the city.

- How do people get to and from work?
- What role does the car play for Lowellians, and what roles do walking, biking, and transit play?
- What is the status of current mobility initiatives?

Most Lowellians drive alone to work...

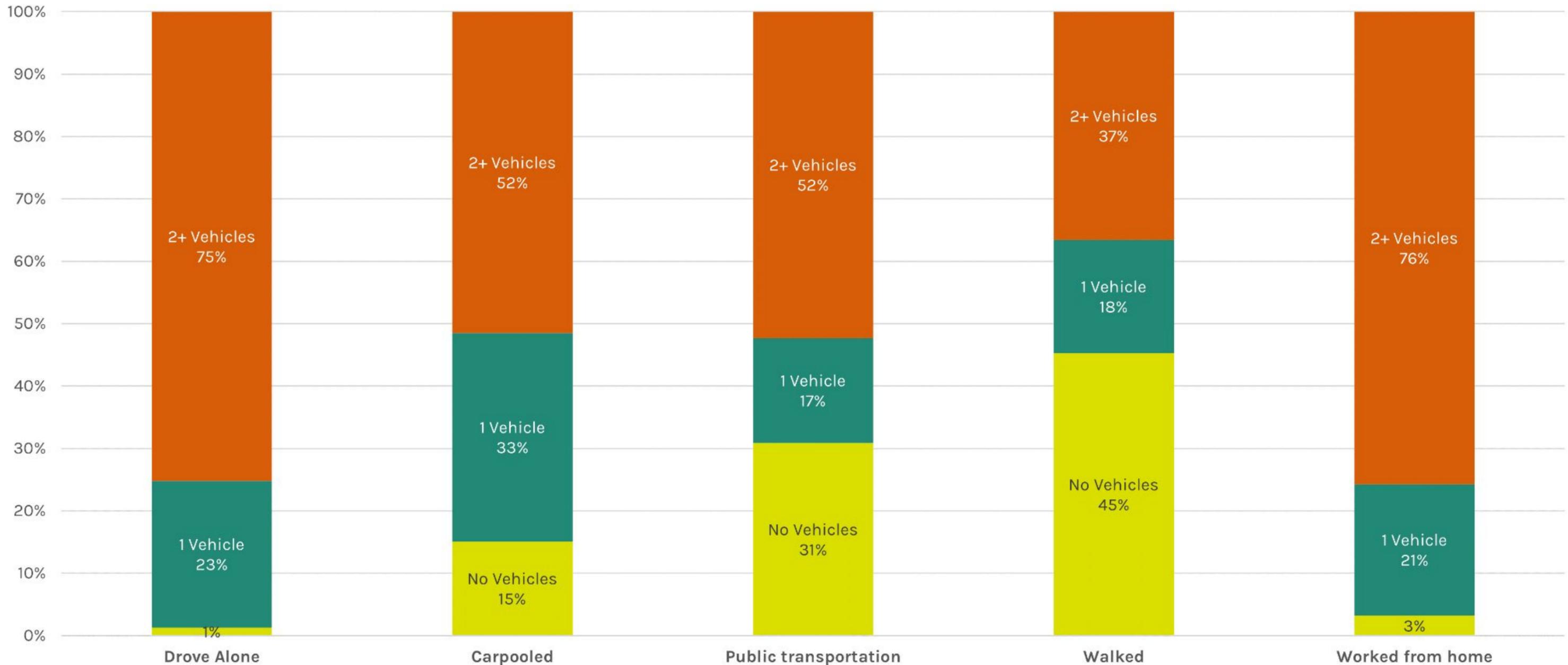


Source: ACS 2021 1-Year Estimates

...but one in six Lowell households do not own a vehicle

Households with fewer vehicles are more dependent on carpooling, public transit, and walking.

Means of Transportation to Work in Lowell by Number of Vehicles Available

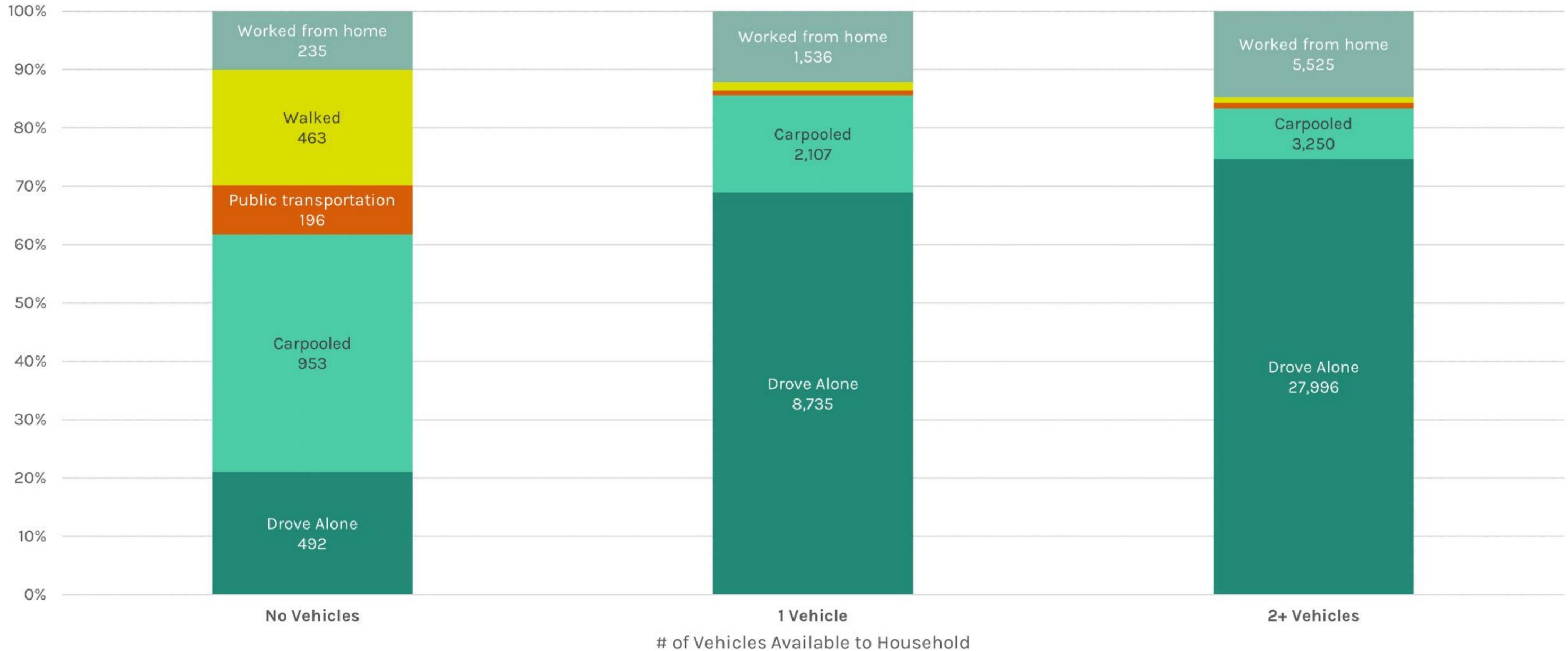


Source: ACS 2021 1-Year Estimates

...but one in six Lowell households do not own a vehicle

Households in Lowell without vehicles rely disproportionately on carpooling, walking, and public transportation to get to work

Means of Transportation to Work in Lowell by Number of Vehicles Available



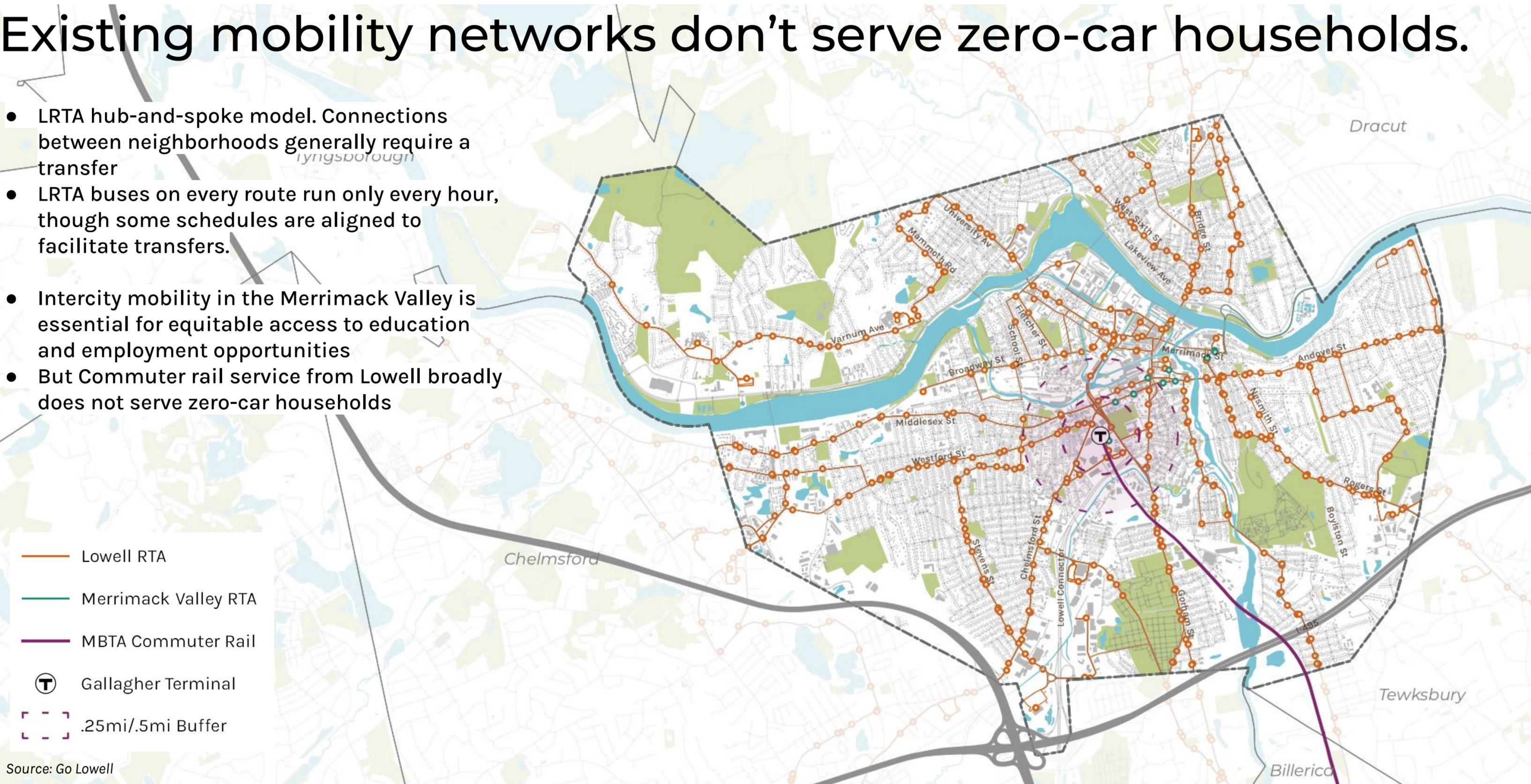
Source: ACS 2021 1-Year Estimates

Existing mobility networks don't serve zero-car households.

- LRTA hub-and-spoke model. Connections between neighborhoods generally require a transfer
- LRTA buses on every route run only every hour, though some schedules are aligned to facilitate transfers.
- Intercity mobility in the Merrimack Valley is essential for equitable access to education and employment opportunities
- But Commuter rail service from Lowell broadly does not serve zero-car households

- Lowell RTA
- Merrimack Valley RTA
- MBTA Commuter Rail
- Ⓣ Gallagher Terminal
- ⌈ .25mi/.5mi Buffer

Source: Go Lowell



Not all streets are safe for people walking or biking



Not all streets are safe for people walking or biking.

Corridors & Streets



Middle St (walkable corridor)



Merrimack St (walkable corridor)



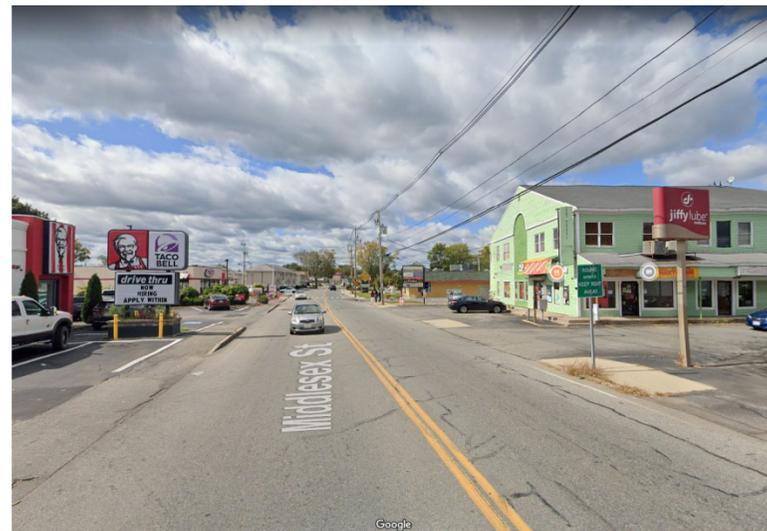
Middlesex St (neighborhood corridor)



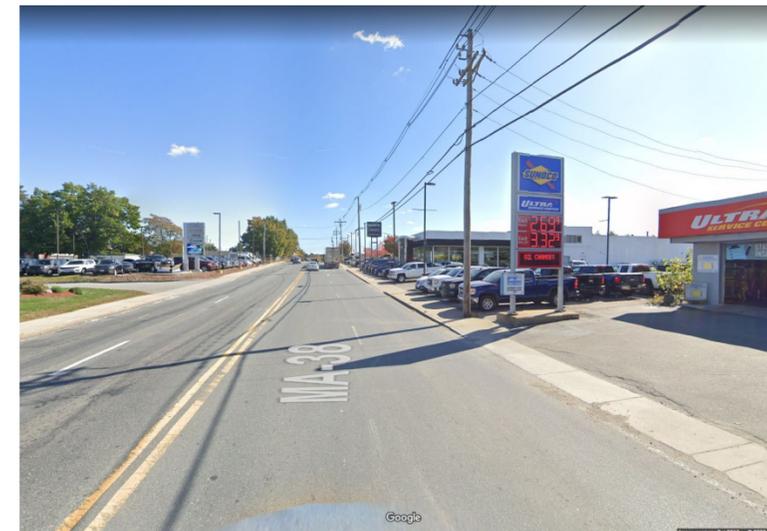
West 6th St (neighborhood corridor)



Gorham St (suburban character)



Merrimack St (suburban character)



Rogers St (suburban corridor)



Chelmsford St (suburban corridor)

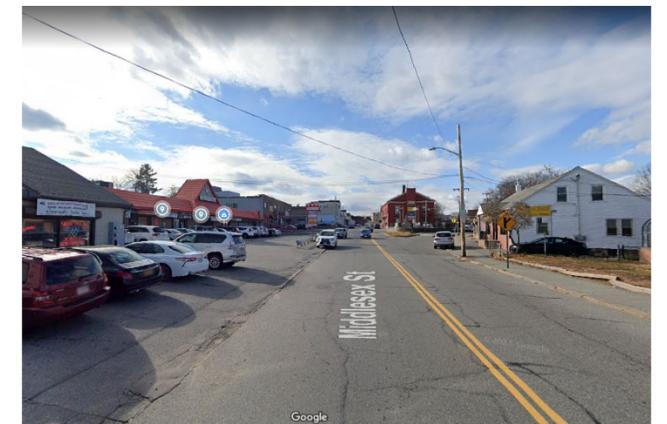
Lowell has a disconnected pedestrian network.



Some streets don't have safe and comfortable sidewalks.

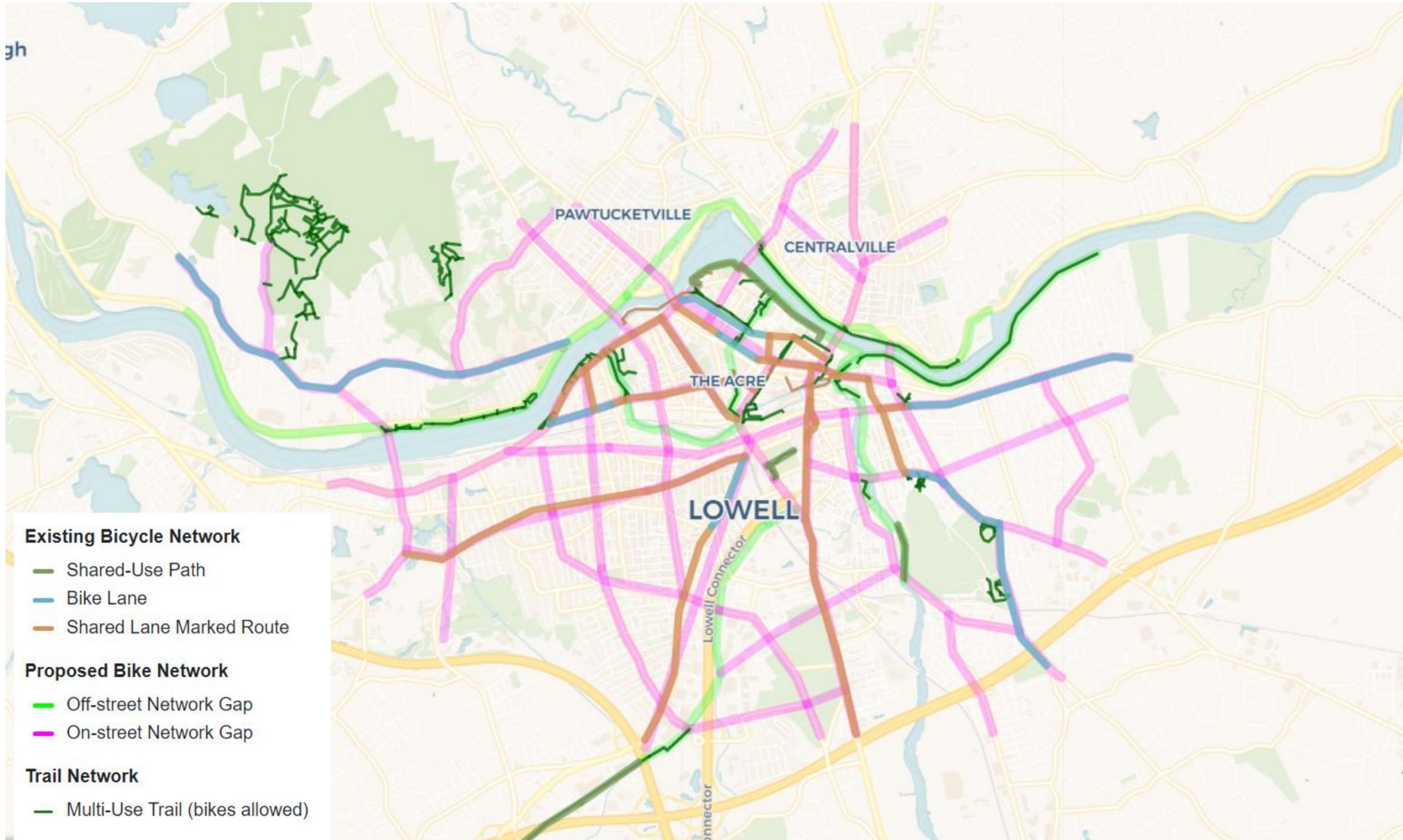


Rogers St



Middlesex St

Lowell has an incomplete bike network.



Some streets represent barriers for bikers.



Andover St



Middlesex St

Environment and Open Space

Do all Lowell residents have access to open space for recreation within walking distance of their home?

- What kind of environmental threats are experienced by Lowellians?
- Which areas in the city are exposed to higher risks such as flooding?
- How is the city prepared for coming changes to climate and flood risk?

Existing open space and recreation network

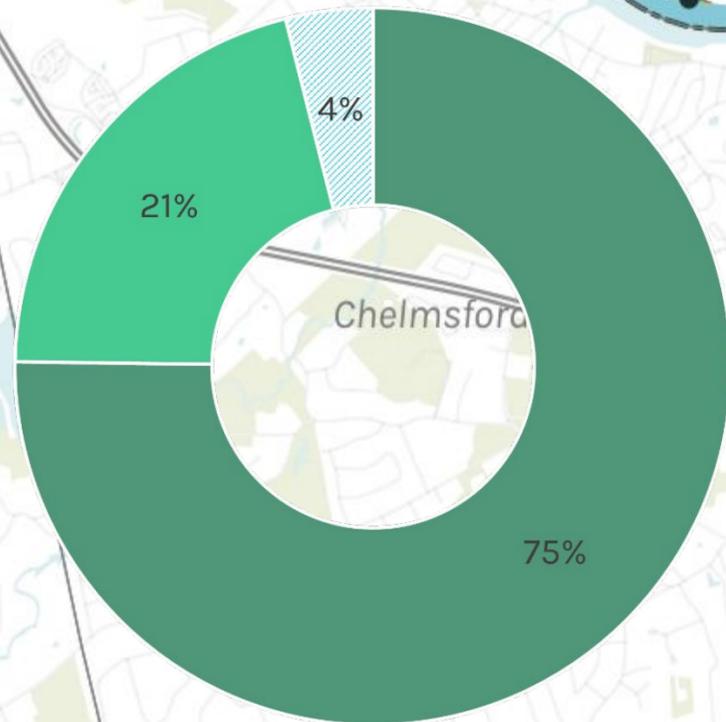
• Boating or Canoe Access Point

Bike & Ped Infrastructure

- Planned Infrastructure
- On-Street Bike Lane
- Off-Street Path
- DCR Trails

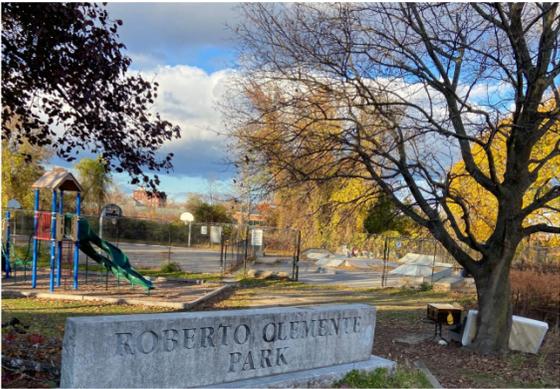
Open Space

- Historic & Cultural
- Recreation & Conservation
- Water Supply Protection



Source: MassGIS

The City is working on new open space projects to achieve a more equitable distribution.



Roberto Clemente Park
(Lower Highlands/Cambodia Town)



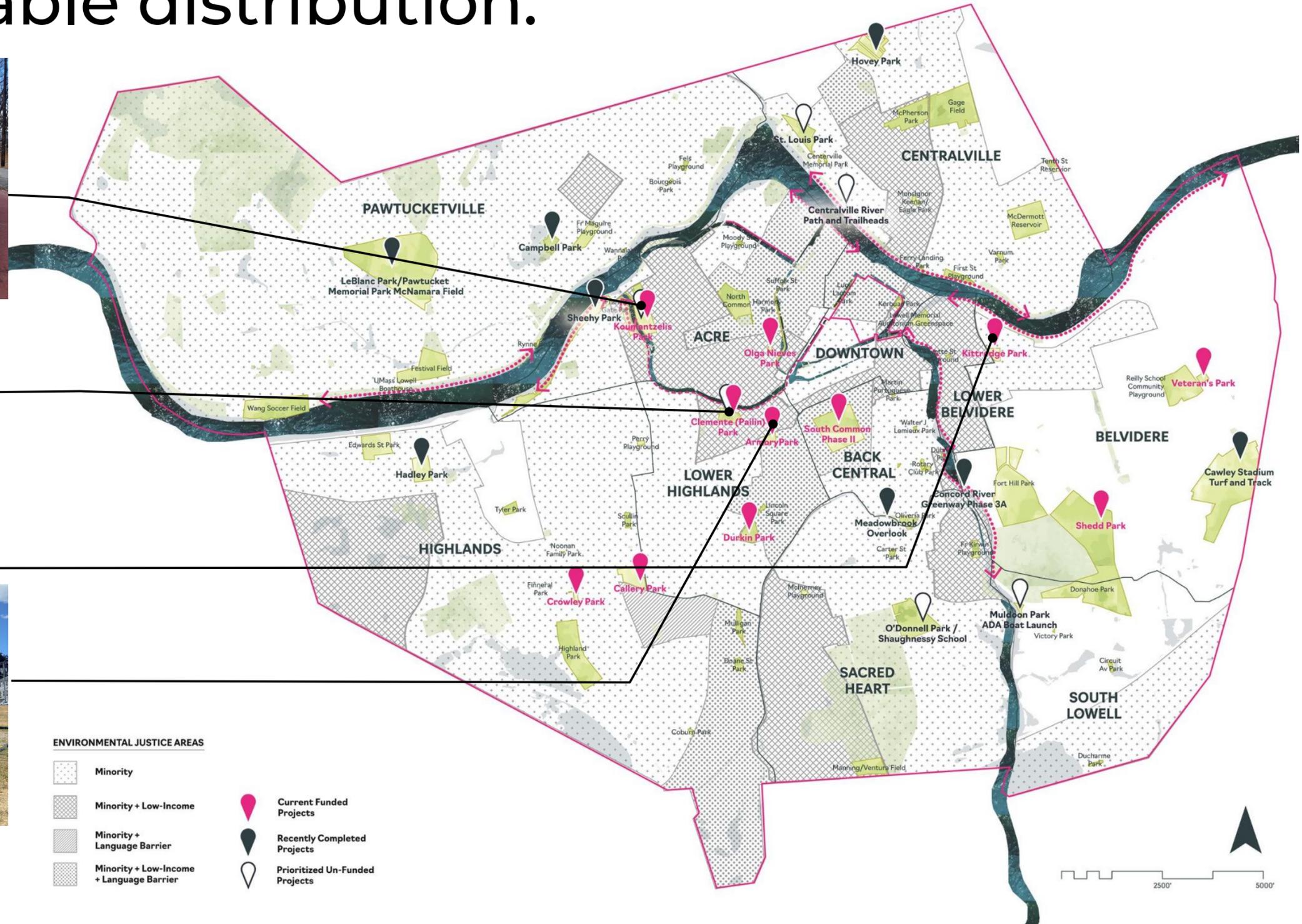
Kittredge Park (Belvidere)



Koumantzelis Park (Acre)



Armory Park (Lower Highlands Cambodia Town)



2018 Open Space and Recreation Plan is moving forward.

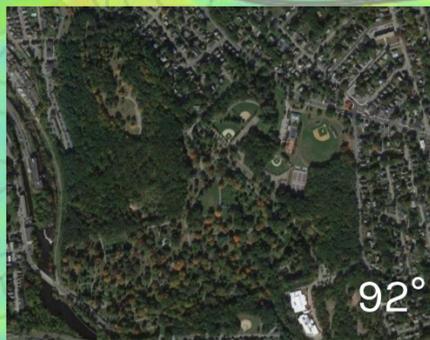
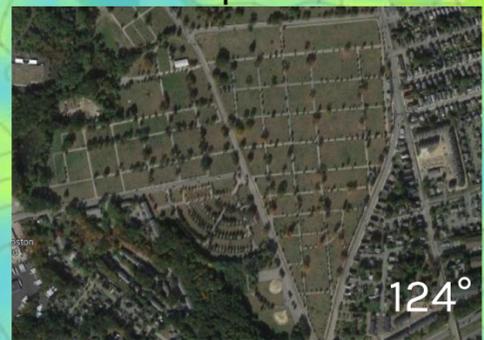
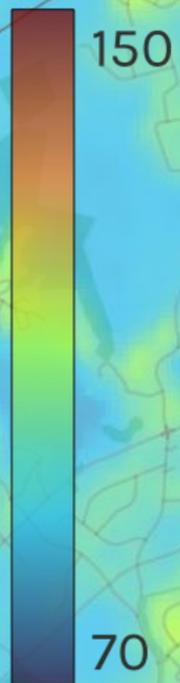
<p>Goal #1: Strengthen <u>pedestrian connections</u></p>	<p>90% in process 10% implemented</p>
<p>Goal #2: Install <u>cycling infrastructure</u></p>	<p>50% not started 50% in process</p>
<p>Goal #3: Increase the types and availability of <u>water-based recreation</u></p>	<p>70% not started 30% in progress</p>
<p>Goal #4: Prioritize improved maintenance, security, and preservation of <u>parks and open spaces</u></p>	<p>35% not started 60% in progress 5% implemented</p>
<p>Goal #5: Streamline <u>communication to the public</u> about parks, open spaces, amenities, and events</p>	<p>50% not started 50% in progress</p>
<p>Goal #6: Increase <u>recreational opportunities</u> and modify existing parks and open spaces so that all residents can enjoy them.</p>	<p>40% not started 50% in progress 10% implemented</p>



Heat islands pose an increasing public health risk.

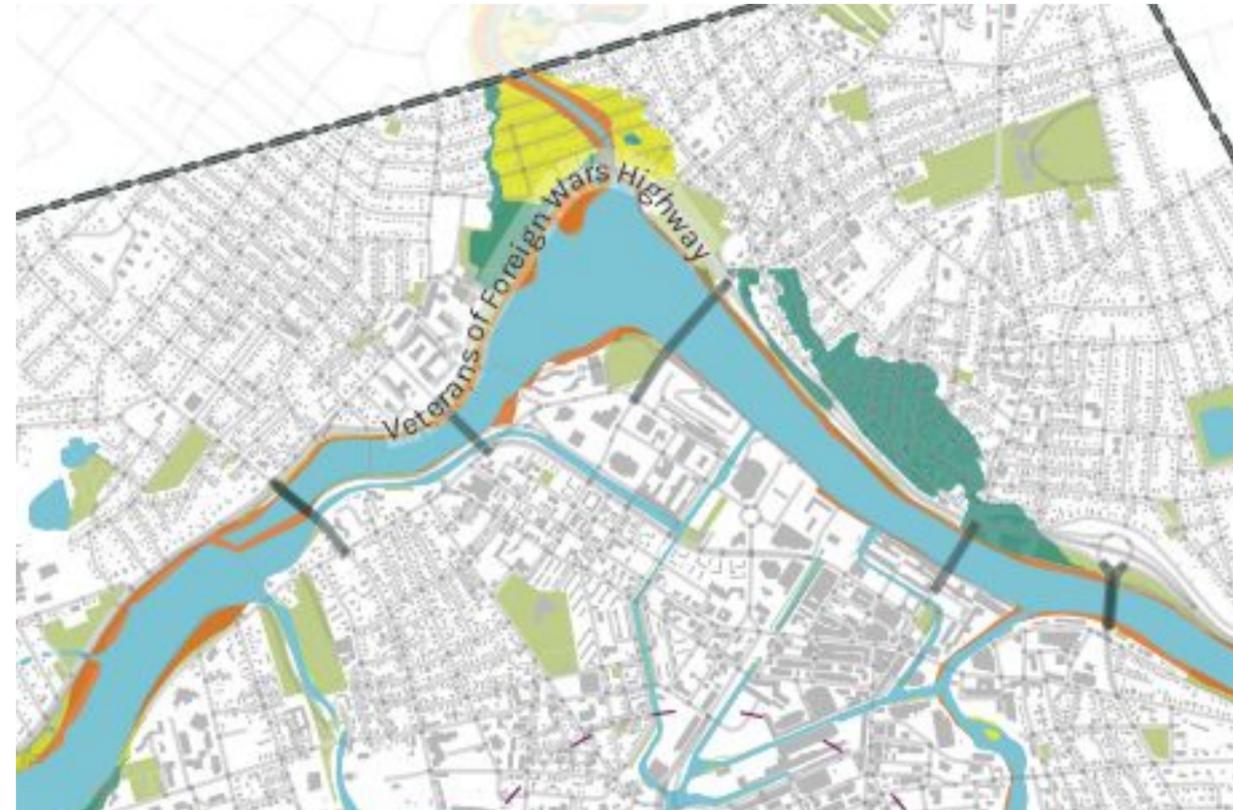
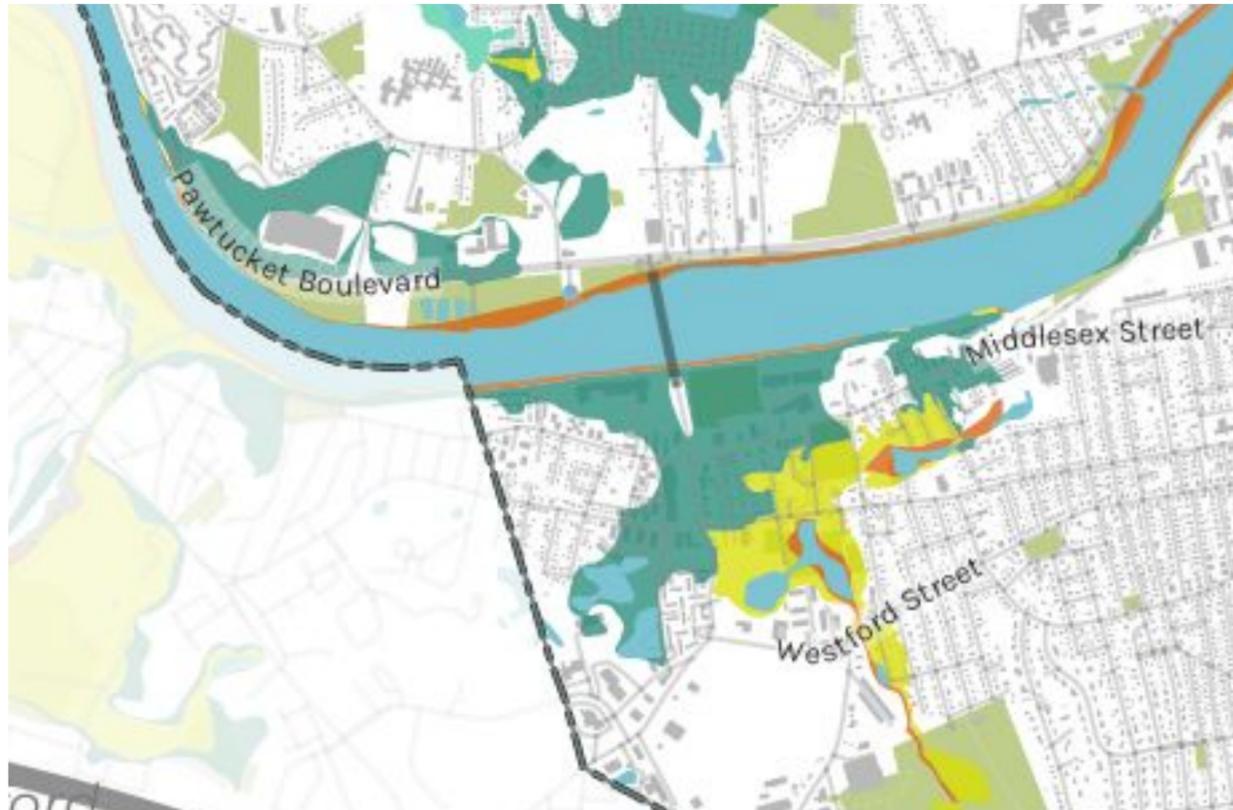
Surface temperature on July 22, 2022

Surface Temperature (F)



Source: US Geological Survey Landsat Data

Several communities in Lowell face a risk of flooding.

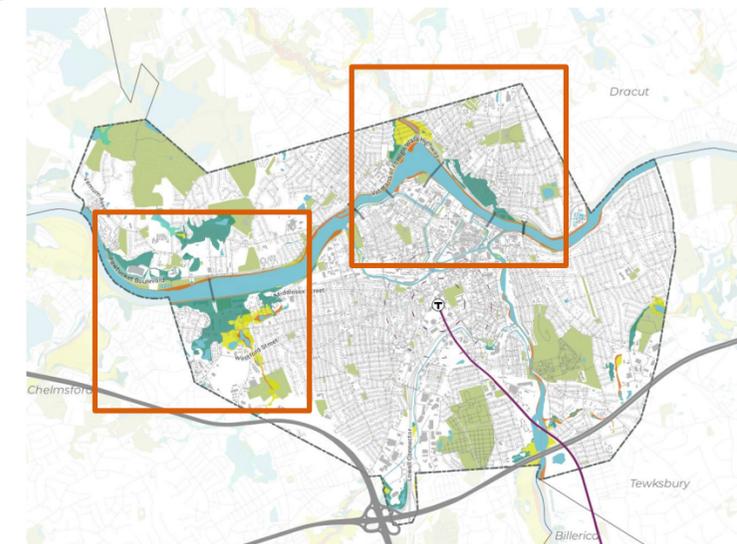


Several communities throughout Lowell have a heightened risk of flooding during inclement weather events

FEMA Flood Zones

-  AE: Regulatory Floodway
-  AE: 1% Annual Chance of Flooding, with Base Flood Elevation
-  A: 1% Annual Chance of Flooding, no Base Flood Elevation
-  X: 0.2% Annual Chance of Flooding

Source: MassGIS

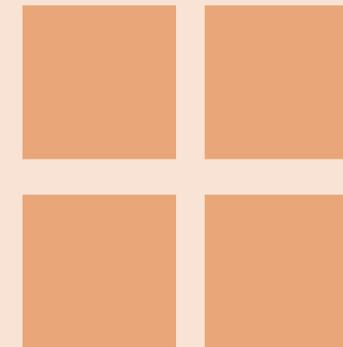


Breakout Rooms

- 1. Reminder to fill Surveys/Polls:**
 - a. [Network building strategy poll](#). Who are the ones we should prioritize for neighborhood meetings and the focus groups?
 - b. [sign up sheet to help in Public Workshop 1](#) (outreach, welcome table, interpretation)

- 2. Beyond the vision survey, what else do you think would be helpful to ask the community at this stage?**

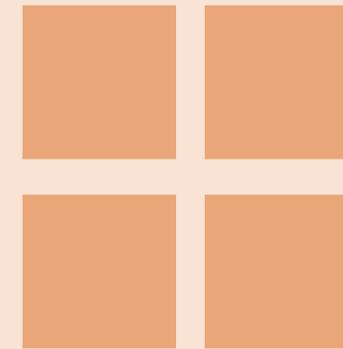
- 3. Lowell Today:**
 - a. Are the initial observations presented an accurate depiction of Lowell Today from your experience?
 - b. What are other key things about Lowell you want others to know, and important to this Plan?



Initial Spatial Observations/Questions

(preliminary, we want to check with you if we're going the right direction)

1. Planning initiatives concentrated on the middle (this is where vacancy and arterial bottlenecks are).
 - a. Hamilton Canal and Overpass are the first proof of concept on initiatives that establish continuity between downtown and the neighborhoods.
2. What role does downtown play for neighborhoods today? How can we diversify the ways people access downtown and central neighborhoods physically?
 - a. How can we better connect communities with economic opportunities?
3. There are many physical and spatial gaps (like vacant lots, industrial areas, non-walkable areas, highways, canals, and other infrastructure) present in Lowell's fabric today that heighten disparities and connections between areas in Lowell.
 - a. Is this a lived reality? Is this a meaningful path to pursue?
4. Are there other opportunity areas in the city that we haven't mentioned here?
 - a. For example, there are many underutilized areas along the river, which could help highlight this natural asset beyond what is downtown.



Next Steps



Next Steps

1. **Public Workshop 1** confirmed for February 1st 6:30 pm at the Lowell Senior Center. **Spread the word!**
2. **Meet the Community Organizer!** **Contact Mercy at lowellforward@utiledesign.com** if you want to schedule a one-on-one.
3. **Lowell Today interim report will be completed and shared with you** by email for additional feedback. **Stay tuned.**

Thank You!

LOWELL
FORWARD